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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY FIELD MANUAL

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INFANTRY
AIRBORNE INFANTRY
AND
MECHANIZED INFANTRY
RIFLE PLATOONS
AND SQUADS

FIELD MANUAL
FORT LEE, VA.
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FOR HISTORICAL USE ONLY

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INFANTRY, AIRBORNE INFANTRY, AND MECHANIZED INFANTRY RIFLE PLATOONS AND SQUADS

			Paragraphs	Page
CHAPTER	1.	GENERAL		
Section	I.	Introduction	1–4	3–4
	II.	Organization and duties of personnel	5–6	4–6
	III.	Leadership and command	7–11	6–13
	IV.	Operations	12–20	13–19
	V.	Fire support	21–24	19–21
CHAPTER	2.	OFFENSE		
Section	I.	General	25–29	22–26
	II.	Rifle platoon in the daylight attack	30–38	26–44
	III.	Rifle platoon in the night attack	39–48	44–55
	IV.	Mechanized platoon in the attack	49–55	56–64
	V.	Mechanized rifle platoon in the attack with tanks	56–66	64–83
	VI.	Rifle platoon in the attack of a built-up area	67–73	83–94
	VII.	Rifle platoon in the attack of a fortified area	74–76	94–100
	VIII.	River crossing operations	77–79	100–103
	IX.	Raids	80–82	104–105
	X.	Infiltration	83–85	106–109
	XI.	Antiguerrilla operations	86–88	109–118
	XII.	Rifle platoon as reserve of the company in offensive operations	89–92	118–120
CHAPTER	3.	DEFENSE		
Section	I.	General	93–96	121–126
	II.	Forward rifle platoon in defense	97–105	126–145
	III.	Reserve platoon of the forward rifle company in defense	106–110	145–149
	IV.	Rifle platoon on the combat outpost line	111–116	149–155
	V.	Special defensive operations	117–122	155–171
	VI.	Mechanized rifle platoon in defense	123–124	172–173
	VII.	Mechanized rifle platoon in the mobile defense	125–128	173–174

			Paragraphs	Page
CHAPTER	4.	RETROGRADE OPERATIONS		
Section	I.	General	129–133	175–178
	II.	Night withdrawal techniques	134–137	178–183
	III.	Daylight withdrawal techniques	138–141	183–188
	IV.	Delaying actions	142–144	188–193
	V.	Mechanized platoon in retrograde operations	145–148	193–195
CHAPTER	5.	AIRBORNE/AIRMOBILE OPERATIONS		
Section	I.	General	149–153	196–197
	II.	Planning	154–160	198–201
	III.	Conduct of joint airborne operations	161–167	201–206
	IV.	Conduct of airmobile operations	168–171	206–210
	V.	Withdrawal by air	172–175	210–211
CHAPTER	6.	RIFLE PLATOON IN TACTICAL MOVEMENTS		
Section	I.	General	176–178	212–213
	II.	Tactical foot marches	179–184	213–218
	III.	Tactical motorized or mechanized movements	185–189	218–221
APPENDIX	I.	REFERENCES		222–224
	II.	COMBAT FORMATIONS		225–249
	III.	BATTLE DRILL		250–266
INDEX				267

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL

Section I. INTRODUCTION

1. Purpose and Scope

a. This manual provides guidance on the doctrine, tactics, and techniques for the employment of the rifle platoon and squads of the infantry, airborne infantry, and mechanized infantry rifle companies.

b. The material contained in this manual is applicable to both nuclear and nonnuclear warfare.

c. With few exceptions the material in this manual applies equally to the three types of platoons. Minor organizational and equipment changes do not affect the basic guidance. Where differences do exist in the employment of the type of rifle platoon, they are so indicated.

d. At the time this manual was prepared, new and improved weapons and equipment were being developed and tested for the rifle platoon. For this reason, no specific mention is made of the nomenclature of squad automatic weapons, grenade launchers, and platoon antitank weapons. The small unit leader must adapt the tactics and techniques in this manual to fit the weapons and equipment of his unit.

e. This manual must be used in conjunction with FM 7–11.

f. Users of this manual are encouraged to submit recommended changes or comments to improve the manual. Comments should be keyed to the specific page, paragraph, and line of the text in which the change is recommended. Reasons should be provided for each comment to insure understanding and complete evaluation. Comments should be forwarded direct to Commandant, United States Army Infantry School, Fort Benning, Ga.

2. Mission

The mission of the rifle platoon is to close with the enemy by means of fire and maneuver in order to destroy or capture him, or to repel his assault by fire, close combat, and counterattack.

3. Capabilities

The rifle platoon is capable of—

a. Closing with the enemy by means of fire and maneuver in order to destroy or capture him.

b. Repelling enemy assault by fire, close combat, or counterattack.

c. Providing a base of fire and maneuver.

d. Seizing and holding terrain.

e. Maneuvering in all types of terrain and climatic conditions.

f. Capitalizing on all forms of mobility.

g. Conducting parachute assaults (airborne infantry platoon).

h. Conducting semi-independent patrol and raid type operations.

4. Characteristics

a. The rifle platoon is the basic tactical element of the rifle company. Its equipment, organization, and training enable it to conduct operations in widely varying conditions of weather and terrain under conditions of nuclear and nonnuclear warfare. When suitably reinforced, the rifle platoon is capable of conducting independent and semi-independent operations for limited periods of time.

b. The rifle platoon of the infantry and airborne infantry can be completely transported in armored personnel carriers (APC's), trucks, and aircraft. The rifle platoon mechanized infantry is completely mobile and is able to be transported in aircraft minus its heavy equipment.

Section II. ORGANIZATION AND DUTIES OF PERSONNEL

5. Organization

a. The rifle platoon of the infantry and airborne infantry company consists of a platoon headquarters, three rifle squads, and a weapons squad. The platoon leader, platoon sergeant and radiotelephone operator comprise the platoon headquarters. Each rifle squad consists of a squad leader and two fire teams (ALFA and BRAVO). A fire team leader, an automatic rifleman, a grenadier, and either one or two riflemen compose the fire team. The weapons squad consists of a squad leader, two machinegunners, two assistant machinegunners, two rocket gunners, two assistant rocket gunners, and two ammunition bearers.

b. The rifle platoon of the mechanized infantry company is organized the same with these exceptions.

(1) Within the rifle squad, one rifleman is also designated as the APC driver.

(2) Within the weapons squad, one ammunition bearer is also designated as a driver.

(3) Each squad has an organic armored personnel carrier (APC) with a mounted machinegun.

(4) An extra machinegun for special purposes and defense is carried in each rifle squad APC.

c. For a detailed explanation of the rifle company, see FM 7–11.

6. Duties of Platoon Personnel

a. The platoon leader commands his platoon and is responsible for the discipline, training, welfare, control, and tactical employment of his platoon. He is responsible for all equipment issued to his platoon and the maintenance of this equipment.

b. The platoon sergeant is second in command. He assists in the control of the platoon, supervises ammunition resupply, and commands the platoon in the platoon leader's absence.

c. The radio-telephone operator operates the radios of platoon headquarters and assists the platoon leader as directed.

d. The rifle squad leader is responsible for the discipline, training, welfare, control, and tactical employment of his squad.

e. The fire team leader is a fighter-leader and assists the squad leader in control of the squad by initiating the action and setting the example within his team as directed by the squad leader. He assists the squad leader as directed. The senior fire team leader commands the squad in the squad leader's absence.

f. Riflemen, automatic riflemen, and grenadiers are trained in individual and team combat action. Their specific tasks are designated by their squad or fire team leader. One rifleman in each fire team normally carries additional ammunition for the squad automatic weapons. Designated squad members may be armed with antitank weapons in addition to their primary weapons.

g. The weapons squad leader is responsible for the discipline, training, welfare, and tactical employment of his squad. He normally selects exact firing positions for squad weapons and may control their fires. He supervises the displacement of his squad.

h. The machinegunners and rocket gunners employ their weapons as directed by the weapons squad leader. They control the fire and displacement of the weapons as directed. The senior gunner commands the squad in the squad leader's absence. Assistant

gunners assist in the employment of their respective weapons. Ammunition bearers provide resupply of ammunition for the machineguns and antitank weapons and are prepared to replace members of either a machinegun or antitank team.

Section III. LEADERSHIP AND COMMAND

7. General

Command is the authority the rifle platoon leader and squad leaders exercise over individuals in their unit by virtue of their assignment. Leadership is the art of influencing and directing these men in such a way as to obtain their willing obedience, confidence, respect, and loyal cooperation in order to accomplish the mission.

8. Principles of Leadership

a. Certain principles are habitually followed by successful leaders in making decisions and taking action. These are—

(1) Be technically and tactically proficient.
(2) Know yourself and seek self-improvement.
(3) Know your men and look out for their welfare.

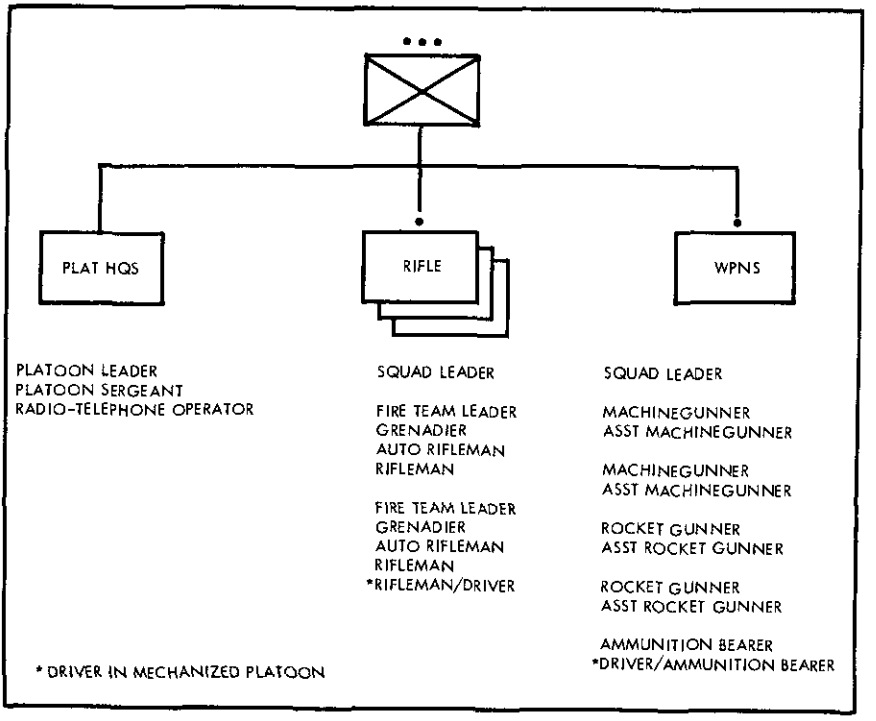


Figure 1. The rifle platoon.

(4) Keep your men informed.
(5) Set the example.
(6) Insure the task is understood, supervised, and accomplished.
(7) Train your men as a team.
(8) Make sound and timely decisions.
(9) Develop a sense of responsibility among your subordinates.
(10) Employ your command in accordance with its capabilities.
(11) Seek responsibility and take responsibility for your actions.

b. For a detailed discussion of these principles, see FM 22–100.

9. Troop Leading Procedure

a. General.

(1) Troop leading procedure is the logical sequence of action that the small unit leader follows while preparing for and executing an assigned mission, making the best use of his time, facilities, and personnel.

(2) Depending upon the existing circumstances and the type of operation, some steps may be accomplished before others. In some situations, certain steps may not be required or may not be possible because of time limitations. Time is the governing factor in the application of the steps of troop leading procedure, and though all steps should be considered, the degree of consideration of each may vary.

b. Steps of Troop Leading Procedure.

(1) *Begin planning.*

(*a*) On receipt of an order, begin to plan the use of available time. Based upon his experience, the leader allots a portion of the time for his own reconnaissance and planning, and the remainder for the planning and reconnaissance of his subordinates.

(*b*) Begin the estimate of the situation.

1. Analyze terrain from map, sketch, or aerial photograph for—

(a) Observation and fields of fire.
(b) Cover and concealment.
(c) Obstacles.

(d) Key terrain features.

(e) Avenues of approach.

2. Analyze enemy strength, locations, disposition, and capabilities.

(*c*) Make preliminary plan based on this initial estimate. This is tentative and is used as a basis for future planning. Announce this plan as guidance to individuals who will make recommendations on the employment of the unit.

(2) *Arrange for—*

(*a*) Movement of unit (where, when, how).

(*b*) Reconnaissance. Select route, schedule, persons to take along, and use of subordinates. Plan to cover the desired area as completely as time permits.

(*c*) Issuance of order. Notify subordinate leaders of time and place the order is to be issued. If the terrain and situation permit, the order is issued from a vantage point overlooking the area of operations.

(*d*) Coordination. Adjacent and support units are coordinated with to insure unity of personnel and mutual support when applicable and there is no conflict between units.

(3) *Make reconnaissance.* On his reconnaissance the leader continues his estimate and completes his estimate and completes his terrain analysis. He notes the effects of the terrain on his preliminary plan and he rejects, adopts, or alters appropriate portions of his plan.

(4) *Complete plan.* After completing his reconnaissance he receives recommendations from his subordinates if appropriate. The preliminary plan is then reviewed accordingly and he completes his plan of action. He then prepares notes to be used in issuing his order.

(5) *Issue order.* At the time and place designated he meets his subordinates. He orients them on the terrain from a vantage point or, if this is not possible from maps, sketches, aerial photographs, or an improvised terrain model. He then issues his order using the standard operation order sequence and includes everything his subordinates need to know. He allows his subordinates to ask questions. He, in turn, determines if the order is understood by asking them questions.

(6) *Supervising activities.* The leader, with the assistance of his subordinates, actively supervises his unit to insure

the order is carried out as intended. If he notes a deficiency or a misunderstanding, he takes immediate corrective action. Supervision is continuous throughout the conduct of the operation.

10. Estimate of the Situation

a. General. It is through the use of the estimate of the situation that the small unit leader takes into consideration all the factors which will affect the employment of his unit. The estimate of the situation is a problem solving process. It is a systematic method of selecting the course of action which offers the greatest possibility of success. At the small unit level the estimate is a mental process. The time spent making the estimate depends on the time available. It is a continuous process and should be followed no matter how quickly a decision must be made.

b. Estimate of the Situation.

(1) *Mission.* The mission is a clear, concise, and simple statement of the task to be performed. It must be carefully analyzed and thoroughly understood.

(2) *Situation and courses of action.* The purpose of this step is to set forward in an orderly manner the pertinent facts of the situation, the enemy capabilities, and the reasonable and practicable courses of action which will, if successful, accomplish the mission. The pertinent facts are obtained by map study, reconnaissance, liaison, and coordination.

(*a*) *Considerations affecting the possible courses of action.*

1. Weather. This includes a knowledge of the present and predicted weather. Consideration is given to its effect on personnel, equipment, visibility, and trafficability.

2. Terrain. A thorough analysis is made of the terrain. It is studied from both the friendly and the enemy viewpoint. Aspects of the terrain that are considered in this analysis are as follows:

(a) *Observation and fields of fire.*

(*1*) Observation is the ability of the unit to see the enemy under various conditions of terrain and weather. Observation is essential to bring effective fire upon the enemy, to control the movement of a unit, and to prevent surprise. From the viewpoint of observation the best terrain permits both long range observation into

enemy-held areas and close-in observation of the hostile forward elements.

(*2*) A field of fire is an area that a weapon or a group of weapons can cover effectively with fire from a given position. When considering terrain in relation to fields of fire, the type of weapon determines what factors will be significant.

(b) *Concealment and cover.* Concealment is the hiding or disguising of a unit and its activities from enemy observation. Cover is protection from enemy fire both conventional and nuclear. In most areas concealment and cover are provided by wooded areas, buildings, valleys, hills, gullies, ravines, folds in the ground, and similar features. Terrain features that offer cover also provide concealment. The greater the irregularity of the terrain, the more concealment it will offer from ground observation.

(c) *Obstacles.* Obstacles are natural or artificial terrain features which stop, delay, or restrict military movement. Natural obstacles comprise such features as unfordable streams, swamps, deep snow, cliffs, steep slopes, flooded areas, thick woods and undergrowth, boulder-strewn areas, lakes, mountains, and nontrafficable soils. Artificial obstacles include those prepared to delay or stop military movement, such as contaminated areas, minefields, trenches, antitank ditches or barriers, roadblocks, road craters, wire entanglements, and various types of beach and underwater obstacles. They also include man made features that were not originally designed as obstacles to military movement, such as canals, levees, quarries, or reservoirs. Obstacles may either help or hinder a unit, depending upon their location and nature. For example, a deep creek lying across the axis of advance will slow up an attacker, while the same type of creek on the flank of an attacker will afford a measure of security. In general, obstacles perpendicular to the axis of advance favor a defending force, while those parallel to the axis may give the attacker an advantage by protecting the flanks, although they will also limit lateral movement and his ability to maneuver.

(d) *Key terrain.* A key terrain feature is any locality or area whose seizure or control affords a marked advantage to either opposing force. The selection of key terrain is based on the mission of the command. Those terrain features are selected which if under our control give us a marked advantage in the accomplishment of the mission, or if seized or controlled by the enemy hinder materially the accomplishment of the mission. A bridge over an unfordable river, for example, is a key terrain feature since it furnishes access to the opposite shore without requiring an assault crossing. In the defense, key terrain features are usually within the assigned sector. In the offense, key terrain features are those which assist in seizing the objective.

(e) *Avenues of approach.* An avenue of approach is an area of terrain which provides a suitable relatively easy route of movement for a force of particular size and type. An avenue of approach should provide—

(*1*) Ease of movement toward the objective.

(*2*) Concealment and cover from the defender's observation and fire.

(*3*) Favorable observation and fields of fire for the attacker.

(*4*) Adequate maneuver room for the attacking force. In the defense, the terrain is evaluated to determine the avenues of approach that are most likely to be used by the enemy. These normally will be the avenues that lead toward key terrain features, provide good observation and fields of fire, concealment and cover, and either avoid or exploit obstacles. In selecting avenues of approach for the offense, the same considerations as above apply.

3. Other.

(a) *Enemy situation.* Disposition, composition, strength, supporting weapons, etc.

(b) *Friendly situation.* Disposition, composition, strength, supporting weapons, etc.

(c) *Own courses of action.* List the reasonable and practicable courses of action which are most likely to accomplish the mission.

(3) *Analysis of opposing courses of action.*

(*a*) Eliminate enemy courses of action which do not affect or influence his course of action.

(*b*) Take each course of action decided upon in turn and analyze it in turn against each one of the retained enemy capabilities. This is done by thinking the operation through from the preparation through the execution stage. This thought process includes a consideration of the facts listed in (2) (*a*) above. This is the process by which all the possible eventualities are pictured in order to discover the strength and weaknesses of each course of action.

(*c*) By this process the factors which will exert a controlling influence on the relative success of the various courses of action will be isolated. These factors are called governing factors and are normally the mission, terrain, enemy dispositions, friendly dispositions, enemy capabilities, and occasionally time.

(4) *Comparison of own courses of action.*

(*a*) List the governing factors isolated in the analysis of opposing course of action.

(*b*) Compare, in turn, each one of these factors against each course of action.

(*c*) As a result of this analysis, the best course of action is selected.

(5) *Decision.* The conclusion reached in (4) (*c*) above is chosen and, in turn, is translated into orders telling who, what, when, where, how, and why.

11. Operations Orders

a. General. The operation order is the order which sets forth the situation, the mission, the commander's decision and plan of action, and the details of execution needed to insure coordinated action by the unit. Warning orders, which contain advance information and instruction pertaining to future operations, are used to permit timely preparation and concurrent planning for action. The amount of detail contained in the order, and the length of the order itself depend on the time available. The small unit leader issues his order orally. The following operation order sequence is that used by commanders at all levels:

b. Operation Order Format.

(1) *Situation.*

(*a*) *Enemy forces.* Situation (composition, disposition, location, movement, capabilities, and indications).

(*b*) *Friendly forces.* Mission of next higher unit, location and mission of adjacent units, and mission of nonorganic supporting units, which may affect the actions of the unit.

(*c*) *Attachments and detachments.* Units attached to or detached from your unit by higher headquarters, including the effective time of attachment or detachment.

(2) *Mission.* A clear, concise statement of the task which is to be accomplished by the unit.

(3) *Execution.*

(*a*) Concept of operations is the commander's overall plan for the operation to include the scheme of maneuver and the use of fire support.

(*b*) In each succeeding subparagraph assign specific tasks to each organic and attached unit.

(*c*) In the next to the last subparagraph designate and assign missions to reserve (*if any*).

(*d*) In the last subparagraph list coordinating instructions common to two or more subordinate units.

(4) Administration and logistics. This paragraph contains information or instructions pertaining to rations, ammunition, location of distributing point and aid station, and other administrative and supply matters. Only necessary information is included.

(5) Command and signal.

(*a*) Special signal instruction, which includes such items as prearranged signals, the use of radios, and other means of communications.

(*b*) Location of the commander and command post during the operation.

Section IV. OPERATIONS

12. General

The rifle platoon fights as part of a company. It must be prepared to fight under any condition of warfare and in all types of terrain and weather. It is imperative that the small unit leader have a sound knowledge of the tactics and techniques of employing his unit in all situations. He must have a knowledge of the effects of nuclear weapons, delivery capabilities, a concept of employment of nuclear weapons, and the changes in tactics

required by the use of nuclear weapons. Paragraphs 13 to 20 contain general considerations for both nuclear and nonnuclear warfare and broad guidelines for the squad and platoon leader.

13. Fundamentals of Employment

a. Control. This is the direction and guidance of individuals in the infantry small unit to insure the accomplishment of the mission. The platoon and squad leaders must have firm control over the individuals within their unit at all times. This is accomplished by the use of control measures, communications, and personal contact.

b. Security. These are the measures taken to preclude surprise by the enemy. They include the use of observation posts, listening posts, outposts, patrols, surveillance devices, warning devices, and the alertness of the individual soldier.

c. Flexibility. This is the quality of being readily adaptable to changing conditions. Flexibility is inherent in the organization of the rifle platoon. The leader must be flexible to the changing conditions and demands of the battlefield to insure that his unit is properly and effectively employed.

14. Characteristics of Nuclear Weapons on the Battlefield

a. The principle casualty-producing effects from nuclear weapons are blast, heat, and nuclear radiation. The effects of each of these depend on many variables; the primary ones being size of the weapons, height of burst (subsurface, surface, or airburst), distance from ground zero, and the protection afforded the troops (in the open, in foxholes, or protected by armor). Troops located in well prepared foxholes have the best chance of surviving a nuclear attack.

b. Conditions that existed on the battlefield of the past will be greatly intensified in nuclear warfare. Some major conditions that will be created are as follows:

(1) *Obstacles.* Serious obstacles that did not exist prior to the detonation of a nuclear weapon can be expected within minutes after a detonation. Blast can cause tree blowdown in wooded areas, create widespread rubble in built-up areas, create open areas, and create large dust clouds and obscure vision. Smoke and fires may make areas impassible and create concealment not otherwise afforded. This will also obstruct electronic observation. Radiation can contaminate areas, and prohibit, or restrict their use by troops.

(2) *Mass casualties.* Creation of a larger number of casualties than has previously been experienced may result from a nuclear attack. Self-aid will assume increased importance. Self-determination to continue with the mission despite being injured will become a dominant factor. Treatment of injuries may be delayed. Initially men who have a good chance of recovery will be treated prior to those having fatal injuries. Soldiers will be returned to the frontlines more rapidly than has been true in the past. All soldiers must know these facts and realize that the accomplishment of the mission is the paramount objective in combat.

(3) *Isolation of units.* Nuclear warfare is characterized by relatively sudden and drastic changes in the tactical situation. Gaps may be created between units. Large numbers of casualties may open areas for enemy penetrations. Small units may become isolated on the battlefield, thus requiring firm leadership, a thorough understanding of the mission to be accomplished, and a high degree of initiative on the part of the small unit leader.

(4) *Psychological aspects.* Because of the conditions stated above; fear of the unknown, shock caused by a nuclear explosion, uncertainty as to what to do, the tendency to panic or to lose his will to fight may become a prominent factor in leading the soldier in combat. Thorough training, enforced discipline, coupled with strong leadership on the part of the small unit leader will prevent this from becoming a major factor. A driving, dominant desire to accomplish the mission must always be uppermost in the minds of all the men in the squad and platoon.

15. Tactical Operations in Nuclear Warfare

Nuclear warfare adds increased emphasis to the training of the individual soldier. He must maintain himself in a high state of physical condition and maintain the knowledge and skills learned, such as camouflage and concealment, field fortifications, first aid, patrolling, proficiency with crew-served and individual weapons, adjustment of artillery and mortar fire, and self-confidence, all provide the foundation on which the successful conduct of operations is built. There are, however, certain other items the small unit leader must consider. These are as follows:

a. Nuclear weapons should be designated as another form of fire support. The small unit can become a powerful force when it can call for nuclear fires on an enemy.

b. Terrain maintains its importance in tactical operations. A small force may, by properly positioning itself and the use of electronic devices and observation, control large areas by its ability to call for nuclear fires. It must be remembered, however, that the application of nuclear weapons and chemical agents may restrict the use of this terrain and reduce the observation capability. Dominant terrain features that provide good observation are also highly suspect targets for both nuclear and nonnuclear weapons.

c. Mobility will assume increased importance. Units may be required to assemble from dispersed assembly areas, disperse after concentrating to perform a mission, move long distances to reinforce sections of the front or to counterattack, and move from location to location to prevent detection by the enemy. For this reason, the small unit leader must be thoroughly grounded in airmobile, mechanized, and footmobile operations, as he may be required to participate in any one at any time.

d. Increased emphasis will be placed on patrolling. Reconnaissance patrols will be needed for target acquisition, surveillance of gaps between battalion and larger sized units, to locate enemy forces, and to make radiation surveys. Combat patrols will be used to harass isolated units, ambush enemy movements, establish roadblocks, and raid installations. These patrols may be mounted, dismounted, or airmobile. FM 21–75 contains detailed patrolling information.

16. Chemical and Biological Operations

a. Both enemy and friendly forces may use chemical and biological agents. They may or may not be used separately or at any particular time. For example, a nuclear weapon may be used and then followed up with a toxic chemical agent, or toxic chemicals may be used to contaminate certain areas in order to make forces more vulnerable to nuclear attack.

b. Chemical and biological operations may be used to cover large areas or to restrict, or to prohibit the use of small areas. Such operations may be used to weaken an entire front by the use of biological agents, or to create a high percentage of casualties within a restricted area.

c. In any case the infantry small unit must be so trained as to enable it to continue its mission. The individual soldier must have a knowledge of unit and individual procedures so that he can carry out his mission with the least risk of injury. Unit leaders must teach individual procedures to their troops, to provide for collective and tactical defense, and to use organizational first aid equipment and detection devices.

d. For a detailed discussion of chemical and biological operations, see FM's 3–5, 21–40, 21–41, AR 220–58 and TC 101–1.

17. Action Against Enemy Aircraft

The rifle platoon and squad take active and passive measures to prevent detection by enemy aircraft and to minimize the effect of enemy air attack. Passive measures include dispersion, the use of concealment and cover, camouflage, and the establishment of an adequate warning system. Under an air attack, all available small arms fire (consistent with the conservation of ammunition) is delivered on the attacking aircraft. Positively identified low flying aircraft may be taken under fire when the unit is not under direct attack, if limitations on firing at low flying aircraft have not been imposed by the company commander. The platoon may use a technique known as a "pattern of fire"—every individual aiming his weapon in the path of the aircraft, and firing on signal, with no attempt made to track the aircraft.

18. Intelligence

a. General.

(1) Combat intelligence is that knowledge of the enemy, the weather, and the terrain which is used in the planning and conduct of tactical operations. The purpose of the intelligence effort is to discover facts, to draw appropriate conclusions from these facts that can be used to facilitate the accomplishment of the mission, and to deny the enemy information of friendly forces and terrain.

(2) Information is sought of the enemy strength, location, and activity. This information is evaluated to determine enemy capabilities, and which of these capabilities the enemy is most likely to use. The small unit leader is particularly interested in such items of enemy information as the strength and location of opposing forces in contact; enemy activity; details of positions, including automatic weapons, mortars, tanks, and antitank weapons; location and strength of local reserves; and minefields, barbed wire, and other obstacles.

b. Collection of Information.

(1) The small unit leader is directly involved in the collection of information about the enemy and terrain. Since the enemy maintains a counterintelligence effort, the small unit leader must be aggressive in his efforts to obtain enemy information. He must lead patrols, establish security posts, and lead his unit in offensive and

defensive operations, reporting all enemy information during conduct of these operations.

(2) Outposts, listening posts, and forward positions have good observation of the immediate enemy area. By reporting everything concerning the enemy and terrain, valuable information is obtained.

(3) Counterfire information assists in locating enemy close support weapons. This information is obtained by actual observation of the gun flash, the sound of the weapon, or by crater analysis.

(4) Patrols provide a means of obtaining information from behind enemy lines. They provide information about obstacles, soil trafficability, enemy strength, locations, and dispositions which are of immediate concern to the commander or small unit leader.

c. Reporting of Information. The platoon obtains information of the enemy primarily through reports from individuals within the platoon. Information and intelligence are also obtained from higher headquarters and adjacent and supporting units. Soldiers must report all information of the enemy, negative as well as positive. Often, the knowledge that the enemy is *not* at a certain location or *not* engaged in a certain activity is extremely important.

19. Communications

a. Communications is the means by which the infantry small unit leader controls his unit. He uses radio, wire, visual signals, sound signals, and messenger to maintain communications within his unit. No one means is satisfactory for all situations. They may be used alone or in combination to insure communication is established and understood. Communication to be effective must be clear, concise, accurate, and timely.

b. Radio is the least secure means of communication. It may be jammed by the enemy. It offers rapid communication and person-to-person contact. It reduces exposure time of the small unit leader to hostile fire and extends the range of communication.

c. Messenger is the most secure means of communication. It is the only means by which bulky items such as maps and overlays may be transmitted.

d. Wire takes time to install, must be maintained, and cannot be moved without recovering the wire and reinstalling it. Once it is installed, it provides security second only to that of the messenger.

e. Visual signals provide a fast means of transmitting a message to a large group. Unless the signal is prearranged and understood, it may be misinterpreted. Visual signals do not provide security since they can be seen by anyone within observation.

f. Sound has relatively the same advantages and disadvantages as visual communications. In addition, the effectiveness of sound may be reduced by normal noises which exist on the battlefield.

20. Maintenance

Maintenance is the direct responsibility of the small unit leader. To survive on the battlefield there can be no instance where a weapon fails to fire, a vehicle fails to start, or a radio fails to function. The small unit leader, through the standards he sets in maintenance and personal supervision, insures the adequate functioning of his weapons and equipment.

Section V. FIRE SUPPORT

21. General

The infantry platoon is provided assistance in the accomplishment of its mission by fires from supporting units.

22. Company Support

The weapons platoon of the rifle company contains three 81-mm mortars and two antitank weapons.

a. The 81-mm mortars supply the primary means of indirect fire support available to the rifle platoon. To assist the platoon leader in obtaining these fires, a forward observer from the 81-mm mortar section headquarters is habitually assigned to the rifle platoon. He will observe and adjust the fires of the 81-mm mortars and, when required, the fires of artillery and heavy mortar units. The 81-mm mortar section is capable of firing white phosphorous (which may be used for smoke, signalling, antipersonnel, and incendiary type missions), high explosive (primary antipersonnel type missions) and illumination rounds. In the defense, barrages of the 81-mm mortar section are located in front of the forward platoons.

b. The antitank squads are normally under the control of the company. On occasion they may be attached to the rifle platoon. This is the primary means of antitank support available to the rifle company. In the defense, these weapons may be kept in reserve to move to the area where the greatest threat exists or they may be employed to protect the avenue(s) of approach which favor the use of tanks. They will often be employed within the rifle platoon area. When this is the case, they will receive priority

in the choice of positions. In the offense, the antitank section's primary responsibility is the defeat of enemy armor. When not occupied in this role they may support the attack by firing at gun positions, bunkers, groups of personnel, and any other suitable target. In the consolidation and reorganization, they are positioned to defeat the enemy armor that may be used in a counterattack. In all these situations the antitank sections may be in support of the rifle platoon throughout all or part of the action. Their effective use will greatly assist the platoon leader in the accomplishment of his mission. For further details on the organization and employment of the weapons platoon, see FM 7–11.

23. Battalion Support

Following are the fire support units organic to the infantry battalion which directly assist the infantry platoon:

a. Antitank Platoon.

(1) The primary mission of this platoon is to provide antitank protection for the battalion.

(2) Elements of the platoon may be employed in the rifle platoon area, both in offensive and defensive operations. While their primary target is enemy armor, they may engage bunkers, observation posts, vehicles, crew-served weapons, grouped enemy personnel, and other similar targets provided this does not interfere with their antitank role. Effective use of these weapons when employed in the platoon area will greatly assist the small unit leader.

b. Mortar and Davy Crockett Platoon.

(1) This platoon provides nuclear fires and close and continuous indirect nonnuclear support for the battalion.

(2) The fires of the heavy mortar section may be used by the rifle platoon. Fires are requested through the company commander who in turn requests fires of the forward observer with the company. This platoon is capable of delivering a heavy volume of accurate and sustained fire at both area and point targets, screening large areas, firing toxic chemical munitions, and providing illumination.

(3) The Davy Crockett weapons provide the battalion commander a nuclear capability of destroying enemy forces which are in contact or approaching contact with friendly elements. There may be circumstances when the platoon may request the fires of these weapons.

24. Division Support

a. Artillery fire will be available to the rifle platoon. This will normally be furnished by the artillery battalion in direct support of the brigade. The artillery has both a nuclear and nonnuclear capability. It can fire smoke, timed fire, delayed fuze, point detonating and illumination missions. It is capable of firing toxic chemicals. The platoon leader will request artillery fires through the company commander.

b. Army aviation is capable of providing aircraft with automatic weapons and/or rockets mounted on the aircraft. These aircraft are capable of delivering fire, providing illumination, and screening with smoke.

CHAPTER 2

OFFENSE

Section I. GENERAL

25. General

This chapter provides the guidance to the infantry, airborne infantry, and mechanized infantry, squad and platoon leader for offensive operations.

26. Mission

a. The mission of the rifle squad and rifle platoon in the attack is to close with and destroy or capture the enemy.

b. The weapons squad furnishes the platoon with close machine-gun fire support and antitank protection.

27. Employment

a. Rifle Platoon.

(1) The rifle platoon normally attacks as part of a coordinated company action, as described in FM 7–11. The rifle platoon maneuvers under cover of both organic and nonorganic fire support to assault the enemy.

(2) When employed as a semi-independent force, the platoon leader has more freedom of action, and employs his weapons squad and supporting fires to contain the enemy and neutralize his fire, while maneuvering his rifle squads to assault him, preferably from the flank or rear. As a semi-independent force, the platoon will usually be reinforced.

b. Rifle Squad. The squad normally attacks as part of the platoon, moving as a unit under supporting fire from other weapons. The squad leader adapts combat formations (app. II) to conform to existing conditions, keeping fire teams intact. If effective small arms fire is brought on it, the squad immediately returns fire and employs fire and movement or fire and maneuver to close with the enemy, either alone, or in conjunction with the other squads (app. III).

c. Weapons Squad. The machinegun and organic antitank weapons are employed as directed by the platoon leader to provide close fire support and antitank protection as the platoon moves forward in the attack.

d. Platoon Reserve. The platoon leader plans to employ his entire platoon in the attack. A reserve may be employed when space is not available for three squads in an assault, or to protect an exposed flank.

28. Conduct of the Attack

Offensive action is characterized by fire and maneuver, and fire and movement.

a. Fire and Maneuver. An attack order consists of two basic parts—a fire support plan and a maneuver plan. Fire and maneuver is the process of one or more units establishing a base of fire to engage the enemy, while another element or unit maneuvers to an advantageous position from which to close with and destroy or capture the enemy. The base of fire may consist of indirect supporting fires, direct fires, or a combination of both. The maneuvering force takes maximum advantage of existing cover and concealment along the maneuver route, and desirably approaches the enemy position from its flank or rear.

b. Fire and Movement. Once the maneuver element meets effective enemy opposition and can no longer advance under the cover of the supporting fires, it employs fire and movement to continue its forward movement to a position from which it can assault the enemy position. Fire and movement consists of one element providing close fire support while another element advances toward the enemy or assaults the enemy position. Fire and movement may be executed by individuals, fire teams, or larger size units as dictated by the situation. It may be accomplished by alternating bounds: one element establishes a base of fire to cover the actions of the other element as it advances toward the enemy. As the initial movement element reaches a suitable position, it establishes the base of fire to cover the actions of the other element as it moves forward. This procedure may be repeated as often as necessary until one or both of the attacking elements are in position to assault the enemy position. Depending upon the effectiveness of enemy fires and observation, it may be necessary to accomplish all or part of the forward movement by creeping and crawling until such time as the attacking elements are in position to commence the assault. Depending upon the situation, it may be necessary to conduct the assault on the objective by the application of fire and movement from the time the assault starts

until the objective is completely overrun. Paragraph 5, appendix III contains a discussion of fire and movement by individuals and teams.

29. Control Measures

The company commander controls the maneuver elements in the attack by utilizing those control measures prescribed in FM's 7–11 and 17–15. In order to permit his subordinate leaders maximum freedom of action, he prescribes the minimum control measures necessary to insure the progress of the attack in the desired manner. Normally these are—

a. Time of Attack. This is the time that the leading rifle elements cross the line of departure as specified in the company order. This is necessary in order to control both the maneuver and fire support elements.

b. Attack Position. This is the last concealed and covered position short of the line of departure where platoons deploy in the attack formation, fix bayonets, and make final coordination. The platoon will halt in the attack position only when final preparations cannot be completed in the assembly area or on the move, or when ordered by the company commander.

c. Line of Departure (LD). This is a line designated by the company commander to coordinate the beginning of the attack and is usually an easily recognizable terrain feature, such as a stream or road, running perpendicular to the direction of attack.

d. Zone of Action. This is an area bounded by the line of departure, final objectives, and boundaries on one or both flanks. The boundaries for the platoon zone of action are designated by the company commander and are indicated by terrain features such as roads, streams, and ridge lines. The platoon is free to maneuver and fire within the assigned zone to accomplish its mission. The platoon leader must receive permission from the company commander before firing or maneuvering outside his zone of action. The platoon is not required to clear enemy resistance from its zone of action unless otherwise specifically directed. The zone of action is normally used in dismounted attacks.

e. Axis of Advance. This indicates the general route along which the platoon will move in the attack. The platoon moving on an axis of advance may bypass enemy forces which do not jeopardize the accomplishment of its mission. Any bypassed enemy is reported promptly to the company commander. Deviation from the axis of advance is permitted to bypass obstacles, however a major deviation must be reported. The axis of advance is most frequently used in fluid or mechanized operations.

f. Direction of Attack. This is a specific direction or route along which the center of the platoon attack formation will move. Effective enemy resistance must be cleared from the terrain along the direction of attack.

g. Check Point. This is an easily identifiable point on the terrain, such as a road junction, used either to control movement or as a reference point for reporting the location of friendly units and the adjustment of fires.

h. Contact Point. This is a point on the terrain where two or more units are required to make physical contact, such as during the consolidation of the objective.

i. Phase Line. This is a line running perpendicular to the direction of attack and is usually an easily recognizable terrain feature such as a ridge line, stream or road. It is used by the company commander to control the forward movement of the platoon and as a reference in reporting locations. The platoon will be required to report arrival at, and sometimes clearance of, phase lines. A phase line may be used to coordinate the advance of attacking elements in order that supporting fires and maneuver will be most effective. The platoon stops at phase lines only on order.

j. Final Coordination Line (FCL). This is a line used to coordinate the lifting and shifting of supporting fires and the final deployment of the attacking echelon in preparation for conducting an assault against an enemy position. It is located as close to enemy positions on the objective as attacking troops can move before becoming dangerously exposed to friendly supporting fires. It should be recognizable on the ground. Ideally, *it should have concealment and cover.* When a requirement exists for two or more elements of a unit to assault simultaneously, elements of the attacking echelon may be halted to await the arrival of other elements.

(1) When enemy positions are known and supporting fires can be carefully planned in advance, the company commander may select a tentative FCL while planning the attack. He normally selects a tentative FCL only for those objectives on which a coordinated assault by two or more platoons is planned, leaving the selection of other FCL to the platoon leader.

(2) Often, an FCL cannot be selected ahead of time. It may be selected or changed during the attack (par. 34).

k. Objective. This is a designated locality or terrain feature to be captured or reached during the attack or during movement. The company commander will assign objective(s) to the platoon.

The platoon is required to seize and control the assigned objective(s). The platoon leader will report the seizure of objectives, and will normally move on order of the company commander to seize subsequent objectives.

Section II. RIFLE PLATOON IN THE DAYLIGHT ATTACK

30. Preparation for the Attack

The platoon normally prepares for the attack in its assigned portion of the company assembly area located within one hour's movement time from the line of departure. Security is maintained by organizing into a perimeter, posting sentries, and using camouflage and concealment. Prone shelters are dug for protection against indirect fire. Upon receipt of the battalion order or warning order, the company commander issues a warning order to the platoons. This is a brief fragmentary order containing time of attack, company mission, and details such as drawing special equipment, ammunition and rations; and turning in of extra equipment. The platoon leader in turn relays his order to his squad leaders. The platoon leader then moves forward to meet the company commander at the time and place set for the company order. He is normally accompanied by a guide and occasionally the platoon sergeant and weapons squad leader. During the platoon leader's absence, the platoon sergeant or senior squad leader supervises the preparation for the attack. This includes the turning in and drawing of equipment, ammunition and rations; checking and cleaning weapons; setting battle sights; and boresighting antitank weapons.

31. Platoon Plan of Attack

(fig. 2)

Upon receipt of the company attack order, the platoon leader immediately makes an estimate of the situation (par. 10) and begins his troop leading procedures (par. 9). Based on these actions, he formulates his plan of attack which consists of two parts—the scheme of maneuver and the fire support plan.

a. The scheme of maneuver is the employment plan for the rifle squads which comprise the maneuver elements. It should be simple, flexible, and achieve surprise. It includes—

(1) *Route.* The route should take advantage of cover and concealment, supporting fires, and direct the attack at the enemy flank or rear. However, the company commander may restrict the choice of routes to coincide with his overall plan.

(2) *Formations.* The platoon leader selects an initial attack formation and may designate formation changes along the route. The choice of formations is influenced by the mission, enemy situation, terrain, weather and visibility, and the desired degree of speed and flexibility. For appropriate platoon and squad formations, see appendix II.

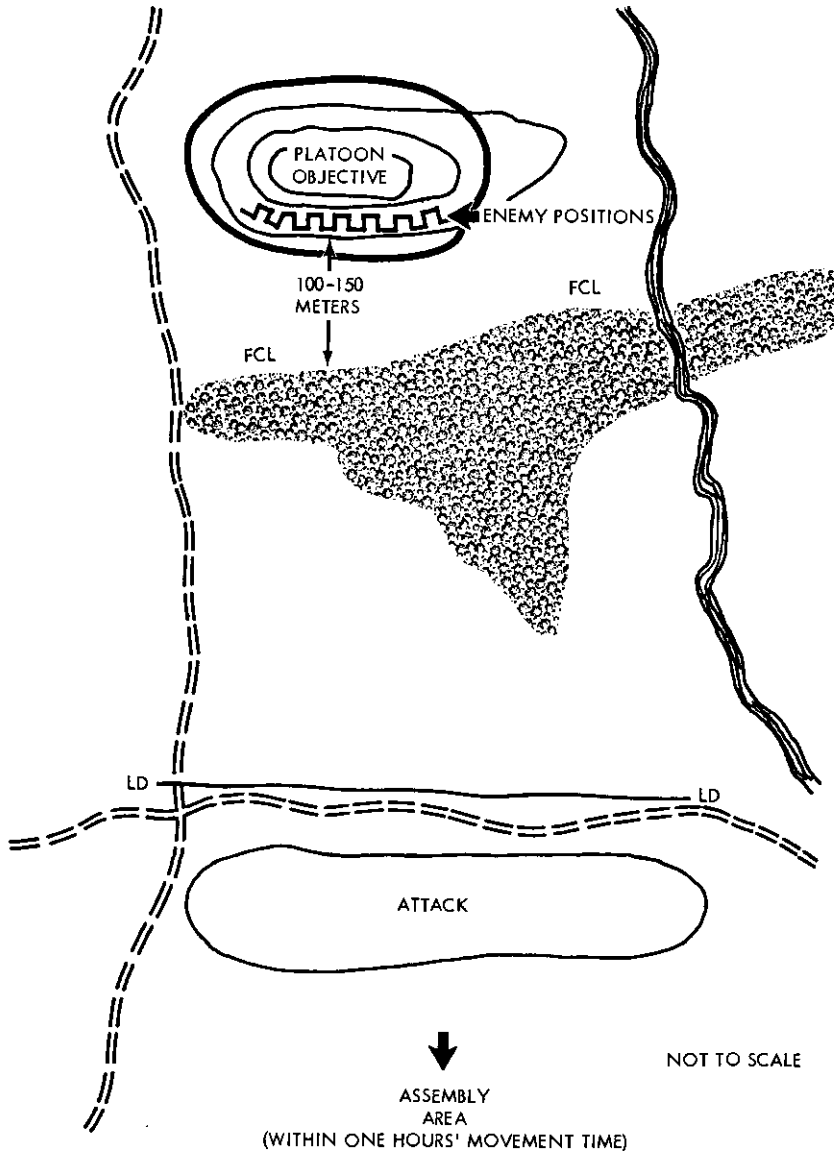


Figure 2. Rifle platoon in the daylight attack (schematic).

(3) *Assault.* The platoon leader selects a tentative FCL if one has not been designated by the company commander. In selecting the FCL, he considers how close the platoon will be able to approach indirect fires falling on the objective; the masking of supporting direct fires, and available cover, and concealment from enemy fires.

(4) *Consolidation of the objective.* The platoon leader designates the area of responsibility for each squad and a general location for each organic and attached crew-served weapon to repel a counterattack. The most desirable method of assigning areas of responsibility is to point out terrain features which mark the limits of each area (fig. 3). Often such terrain features will not be visible, in which case the platoon leader uses the clock system. An imaginary clock is placed on the objective

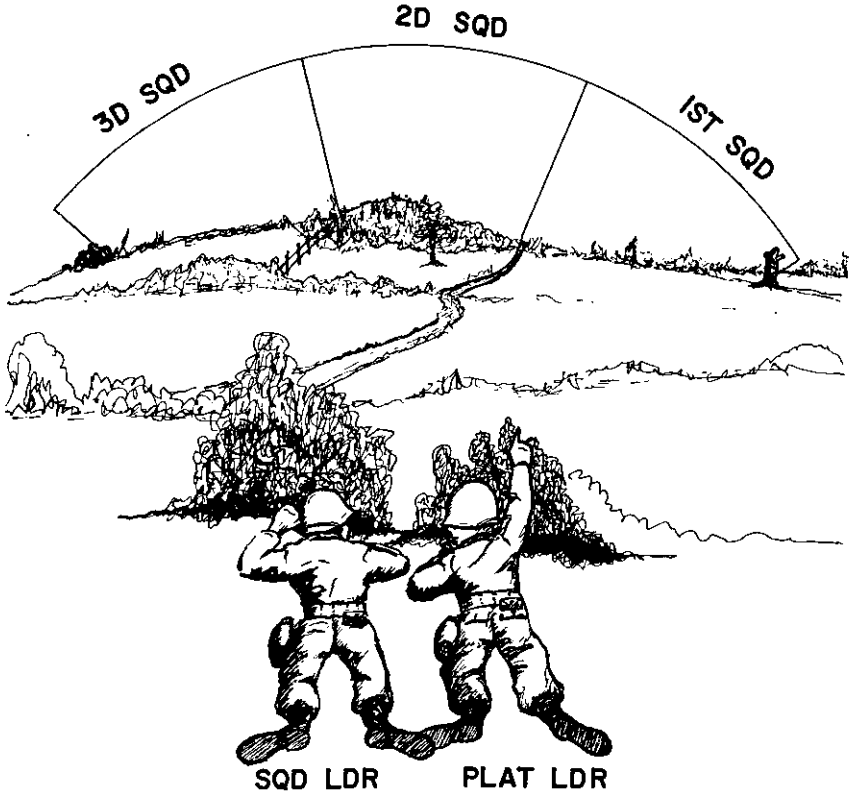


Figure 3. Terrain feature method of designating squad areas for consolidation.

with the center of the clock on the center of the platoon objective. The 6 o'clock—12 o'clock axis is specified on the ground by the platoon leader as extending from one outstanding feature to another, visible in the area, and usually in the direction of the assault. Squad and weapons positions are assigned by hour number (fig. 4).

(5) *Control.* The platoon leader positions himself where he can best control the entire platoon and influence its actions. The platoon sergeant is placed where he can best assist the platoon leader. Designation of a base squad, oral orders, personal contact, radio, flares and smoke streamers, and arm-and-hand signals are normally used to control the platoon.

b. In the *fire support plan,* the fires of weapons of the company and higher units are planned to support the attack by neutralizing enemy positions while the platoons maneuver to close with the enemy. These fires, announced in the company order, are considered by the platoon leader to determine if they will adequately support his plan of maneuver. If the platoon leader desires additional supporting fires, he requests them from the company commander. Frequently, the platoon leader will be accompanied by an 81-mm mortar forward observer who can assist him in fire planning. In addition to considering nonorganic supporting fires, the platoon leader plans the employment of organic and attached weapons. If available support fires are inadequate to support his scheme of maneuver, he may use a rifle squad to provide additional supporting fires. The platoon leader's plan for organic and attached supporting weapons includes—

(1) *Initial employment.* The platoon leader designates general firing positions and assigns targets. His decision on the employment of these weapons is influenced primarily by observation, fields of fire, and weapons characteristics.

(*a*) *Machineguns.* If positions are available near the LD which afford observation and fields of fire over the route to the initial objectives, machineguns of the weapons squad may occupy these positions just prior to H-hour. If a portion of the route is obscured from these positions, best fire support may result if one machinegun occupies a position near the LD while the other accompanies the maneuver element. If no fields of fire and observation exist over the route from positions near the LD, machinguns should accompany the maneuver element.

(*b*) *Organic antitank means.* Due to the comparatively short range of the platoon's organic antitank means,

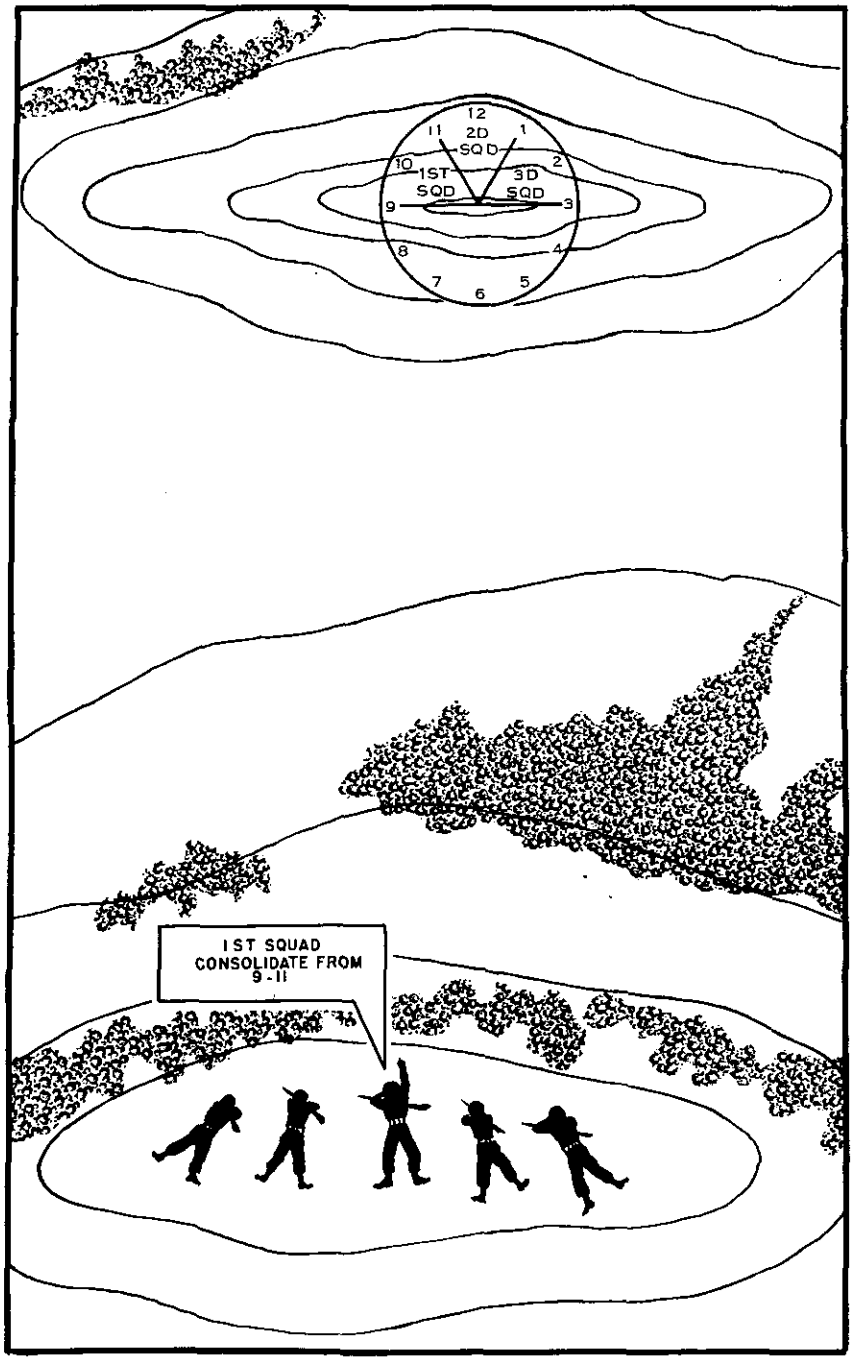


Figure 4. Clock system of designating squad areas for consolidation.

they will normally accompany the maneuver element until a suitable firing position becomes available. If no armor threat exists, they are used to fire on such targets as grouped personnel, bunkers, etc.

(*c*) *Attached weapons.* The platoon leader's plan for the use of attached weapons is based on observation, fields of fire, weapon characteristics, and the recommendations of leaders of attached units.

(2) *Along the route.* Plans are made for the machineguns to displace to new positions as their fires are masked by the advance of friendly elements, or when control becomes difficult.

(3) *Employment during the assault.* Machineguns, organic antitank means, and attached weapons should be in position to cover the movement of the rifle squads in the assault. They provide maximum fire support during the assault, continuing to fire until masked by the advance of friendly troops. One or more machineguns may accompany the rifle squads in the assault.

(4) *Consolidation.* General locations are designated for each weapon on the objective, covering likely avenues of enemy counterattack. Routes for displacement to the objective should permit rapid movement and early occupation of positions.

(5) *Control.* The platoon leader plans to keep his organic and attached supporting weapons within communicating distance so he can control the fire throughout the attack. If this is not feasible, the platoon sergeant or weapons squad leader may be used to assist in this control. Radio as well as sound and visual signals are used. To avoid exposure to enemy fire and observation, weapons crews should be led into position over covered routes.

c. The platoon leader will plan for the breaching of obstacles and enemy fortifications which may be encountered along the route and within the objective area. When there are suspected but unlocated bunkers in the area, the platoon leader makes special preparation in the event one or more of the suspected bunkers are encountered. These special preparations include—

(1) Informing the squad leaders of the suspected bunkers and other possible bunker locations.

(2) Arming the platoon with additional WP and HE hand grenades. Special equipment and weapons (wire cutters, bangalore torpedoes, flamethrowers, demolitions, etc.) will be obtained as needed.

(3) Tentatively designating the elements of the platoon to comprise the fire support and the maneuver elements and assigning special tasks to the maneuver element (pars. 74–76).

(4) Assignment of available special equipment to the squad having the mission of final neutralization of the bunker.

d. At the designated time and place the platoon leader assembles his subordinate leaders, including attached unit leaders, and issues his attack order following the standard operation order format (par. 11). If possible, before issuing his order, he orients his subordinates from a vantage point. Otherwise, the platoon leader uses a map, improvised terrain model, or a sketch. In issuing his order, he includes only such information as his subordinates will need to know. Following issuance of the order, he asks questions of his subordinates to insure that the order is thoroughly understood.

e. Whenever feasible, the platoon should conduct a rehearsal of the planned attack on terrain which approximates that of the objective area as closely as possible. A rehearsal is a valuable means of insuring that squad and individual tasks are understood, that planned control measures are adequate, that radios are in working order, and that the planned scheme of maneuver and fire support can accomplish the assigned mission. The rehearsal should cover movement to and past the LD, actions on unexpected enemy contact, actions at the FCL, the assault, and consolidation of the objective. These actions can be telescoped in time and space.

32. Actions of Squad Leaders

Upon receipt of the platoon attack order, the squad leaders make an estimate of the situation (par. 10) and start their troop leading procedures (par. 9).

a. Rifle Squad Leader. During his reconnaissance, the squad leader studies the terrain, paying particular attention to the route, landmarks on which to guide, and known or suspected enemy positions. Based on this, he plans the actions of his squad from the time it crosses the line of departure through consolidation of the objective. He plans in detail his assigned tasks, any anticipated action at danger areas along the route such as seizing key terrain short of the objective, and his squad's part in the assault and consolidation.

b. Weapons Squad Leader. During his reconnaissance, the weapons squad leader selects exact firing positions for weapons (including both primary and alternate positions) according to the platoon leader's instructions. He pays particular attention to tar-

gets, routes to weapons positions, routes for displacement, and the route the maneuver element will take to the objective.

c. Issuance of Orders. Time permitting, the squad leaders issue their orders, following the standard operations order format (par. 11) in the assembly area using an improvised terrain model or sketch to orient their men. Often the available time will be so limited the squad leader must issue his order while moving forward from the assembly area or in the attack position. The squad leader should orient his men on the terrain as soon as possible.

33. Conduct of the Attack

a. General. Control of small units in the attack is most difficult. The platoon leader uses his subordinates, radio, and visual signals (arm-and-hand, flares, smoke streamers) to control his platoon. He assigns definite missions to subordinate leaders and individuals. He anticipates situations that could develop and keeps his plan of attack flexible.

b. Assembly Area to Line of Departure. The rifle platoon moves forward from the assembly area under company control. The platoon will often be under the command of the platoon sergeant or senior squad leader for this movement. Elements of the weapons squad may precede the remainder of the platoon to occupy firing positions on or near the line of departure. If an attack position is used the platoon deploys into the initial attack formation, posts security as required, and accomplishes last minute coordination. Normally, movement from the assembly area is timed so that leading elements of the platoon cross the line of departure at the specified time without halting in the attack position. In either situation, deployment into the initial platoon and squad attack formations is accomplished and bayonets are fixed prior to crossing the line of departure.

c. Line of Departure to the Final Coordination Line.

(1) The maneuver element of the rifle platoon makes a rapid and continuous advance from the line of departure to the FCL. Maximum use is made of cover, concealment, and supporting fires, to include smoke.

(2) Elements of the weapons squad and attached weapons support the forward movement of the maneuver element. The squad leader or gunner specifies the method and rate of fire and gives the command to open fire on specified targets. Sufficient fire is placed on a target to neutralize it, but consideration is given to conserving ammunition for other targets which may appear during the attack. The squad leader or gunner observes the

progress of the maneuver element and engages targets which threaten it. When both machineguns are located close together, the squad leader anticipates the masking of fire and displaces the weapons by team echelon. Displacement by team echelon means one machinegun displaces prior to its fires being masked by the maneuver elements. The remaining machinegun continues to provide fire support until its fires are masked. The displacement of all supporting weapons should be so timed that the platoon is provided with maximum continuous close fire support. When the weapons are separated, teams may displace under control of the gunners when their fires are masked, or when they can no longer provide close fire support.

(3) If the platoon is subjected to artillery or mortar fire along the route, is moves quickly through or around the impact area.

(4) When enemy resistance is encountered short of the objective, fire is returned immediately by those squads in position to fire. Organic and attached supporting weapons engage the enemy and the platoon leader requests additional supporting fires as required. Depending on the location and nature of the enemy resistance and the plan of attack, it may be possible to bypass it. Bypassing is considered only when the enemy cannot be neutralized or eliminated, and cannot affect the accomplishment of the mission. When such action is taken, it is reported to the company commander.

(5) Aggressive action is taken to eliminate the resistance. The continuous application of fire alone will normally not be decisive and will result in a stalled attack and unnecessary casualties. If a squad is in a position to maneuver against the enemy, the squad leader quickly makes an estimate of the situation to determine if he can use battle drill (app. III) within the squad to close with and destroy the enemy. The enemy strength and effectiveness of his fire may prevent the squad from overcoming it, in which case the squad continues to deliver fire pending instructions from the platoon leader. Fire superiority over the enemy is necessary before maneuver can be accomplished. If the squad can employ battle drill, the squad leader maneuvers over a covered and concealed route to strike the enemy flank or rear.

(6) When the enemy resistance is first encountered, the leading squads return fire immediately. Because of his loca-

tion well forward in the formation, the platoon leader will be able to see the action being taken by the leading squads. The platoon leader makes an estimate of the situation (par. 10), quickly formulates a plan (including a FCL if necessary), and gives commands or signals to carry out his plan. He should not commit squads in a piecemeal manner but should initiate a coordinated action which will subject the enemy resistance to the platoon's maximum power. Prompt action by the platoon leader is necessary in order to properly control and coordinate the action. The platoon leader attempts to maneuver an element to strike the flank or rear of the enemy position. When the enemy resistance is destroyed the platoon continues rapidly toward its assigned objective.

(7) Obstacles encountered along the route will be breached with the means available or bypassed. The platoon leader will decide how to best overcome the obstacles without losing the momentum of the attack. The company commander should be informed of any obstacles that may affect units following the platoon.

34. Movement From the Final Coordination Line to the Objective

a. The assault is controlled and coordinated by the use of the final coordination line (FCL). The FCL is the location on the ground at which the platoon completes its deployment in preparation for conducting an assault. The point at which the FCL is located is determined by how close the attacking force can get to the objective without suffering unacceptable casualties from friendly supporting fires. Because of the dispersion characteristics of typical larger caliber fires, this is approximately 100–150 meters. However, this distance may be reduced if terrain permits, or if the platoon leader determines that fewer casualties will be suffered if the attacking echelon moves closer to the enemy positions under cover of supporting fires, as in the case of a well prepared defensive position. If a tentative FCL has been previously designated, the platoon leader determines whether or not the existing situation permits its use. If a tentative FCL has not been prescribed prior to commencing the attack, or if the company commander does not prescribe one during the attack, the platoon leader will designate one at the earliest possible time in order that coordination may be made in preparing for the assault. He may do this by referring to previously designated checkpoints or phase lines or by specific reference to identifiable terrain features. When the tentative FCL is selected, or changed, both the company commander and fire support units must be immediately notified.

b. As the platoon approaches the final coordination line, supporting fires on the enemy position increases in intensity. The platoon completes its deployment so that as it crosses the FCL it will be in a formation to conduct an assault. In some situations, the attacking troops may be halted so that deployment may be completed and all elements cross the FCL simultaneously. If such a halt is required, it will be accomplished *short* of the FCL so that supporting fires can continue on the enemy position (fig. 5).

c. When deployment is completed the platoon crosses the FCL. At this time, supporting fires dangerous to the troops (heavy mortar and artillery) are lifted or shifted while others (such as 81-mm mortars), continue to fall on the enemy position. The attacking troops, together with direct fire supporting weapons, increase the intensity of their fires in order to maintain fire superiority over the enemy. This lifting or shifting of the supporting fires, normally controlled by the company commander, must be coordinated closely with the advance of the attacking troops. The commander is assisted in this by reports or signals from his platoon leaders and by his own observation of the attack. As the fires of direct fire weapons become masked by the attacking troops, they are shifted by the gunners.

d. The successful movement of the attacking echelon is largely dependent upon the effectiveness of the supporting fires. Normally, enemy resistance will dictate an advance by fire and movement. In this case, the enemy position(s) offering resistance must be singled out by platoon and squad leaders as individual objectives. It is emphasized that the FCL is not normally the location where assault fire techniques are initiated.

e. When the fires of the attacking echelons have eliminated or neutralized effective enemy fire, assault fire techniques are employed. This condition cannot be predetermined prior to crossing the FCL, but may occur at any time between the FCL and the enemy position. Riflemen close with the enemy moving rapidly, firing aimed or well-directed shots either from the shoulder or underarm position at locations in their zone of advance that could conceivably contain an enemy. When an enemy exposes himself or a definite target appears, the riflemen must fire. Regardless of whether the riflemen fire from the shoulder or underarm position, it will usually be necessary to pause in order to insure an aimed or well-directed shot. This phase of the assault is characterized by the volume and accuracy of fire and violence of action. It is designed to kill and demoralize the enemy, and keep him down in his hole until the riflemen can close with and kill or capture him. Squad automatic weapons are fired in short bursts,

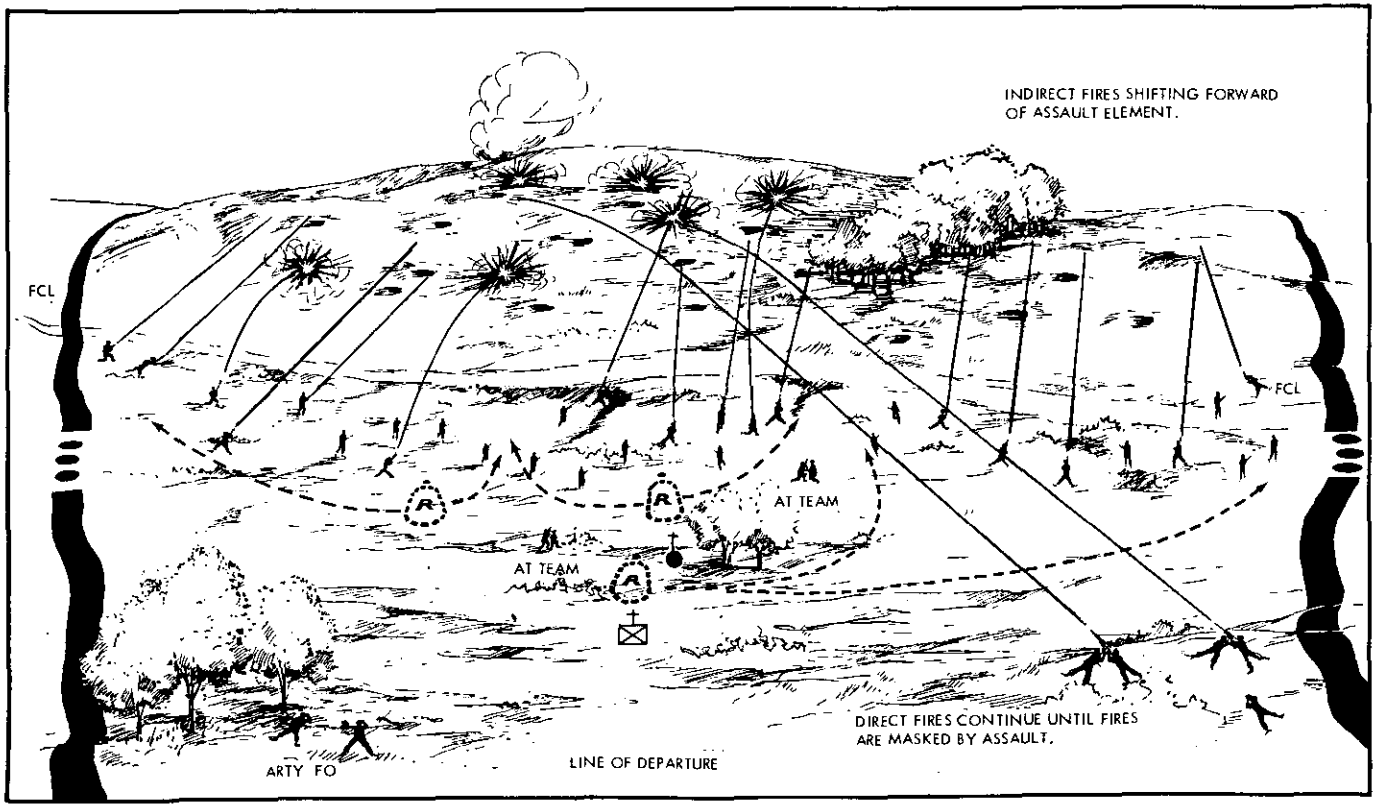


Figure 5. Rifle platoon crossing the FCL (schematic).

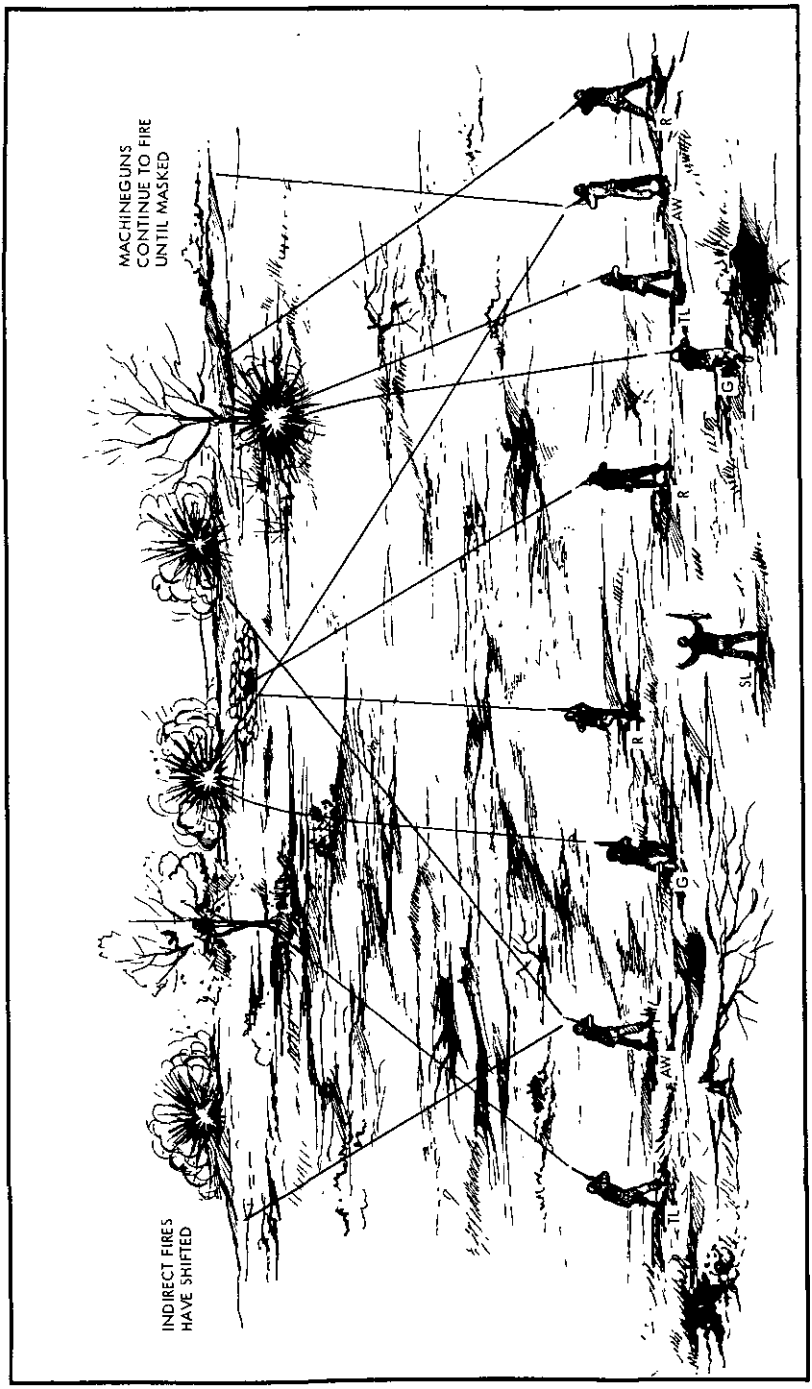


Figure 6. The assault when fire superiority has been gained (schematic).

covering the squad front. Grenade launchers, hand grenades, bayonets, and flamethrowers are used to overcome pockets of resistance (fig. 6).

f. The assaulting troops having closed with the enemy, clear the enemy's positions and move over the objective far enough to place fire on any withdrawing elements and to protect against a counterattack.

g. Control of the platoon in the assault is exercised as follows:

(1) The platoon leader locates himself where he can best influence the action. This may be with one of the assaulting squads or centrally located in rear of the platoon.

(2) In cases where more than one platoon is participating in the assault, the company commander designates a base platoon. Platoons in turn designate base squads. All squads guide on the base squad. The base squad leader designates a base fire team within his squad. In other squads, the fire team closer to the base squad is designated as the base fire team.

(3) All leaders insure that a heavy volume of accurate fire covers the objective, and that the assault moves forward aggressively. As the noise and confusion of battle normally makes control by voice difficult, leaders often have to move to critical points of action where they can make certain their commands are understood and carried out.

(4) Since the unit must be prepared to repel a counterattack and/or resume the attack after the objective is seized, all leaders insure that individuals do not "waste" ammunition during the assault by indiscriminate firing.

35. Conduct of the Assault Against a Strong Enemy Defense (fig. 7)

a. Depending upon the time and resources available, the enemy will continually improve his defensive positions by the construction of overhead individual and weapons emplacements, the improvement of existing natural obstacles, installation of artificial obstacles, and the preparation and coordination of his defensive fires. While the basic principles of the assault discussed in paragraph 34 remain applicable to the assault of strong enemy positions, their application will vary with each situation.

b. When the enemy has obstacles forward of his defensive position, maximum use will be made of large caliber indirect fire support weapons to saturate the area immediately forward of his positions to destroy and/or clear paths through such obstacles. Under these conditions, positioning for the assault will be accom-

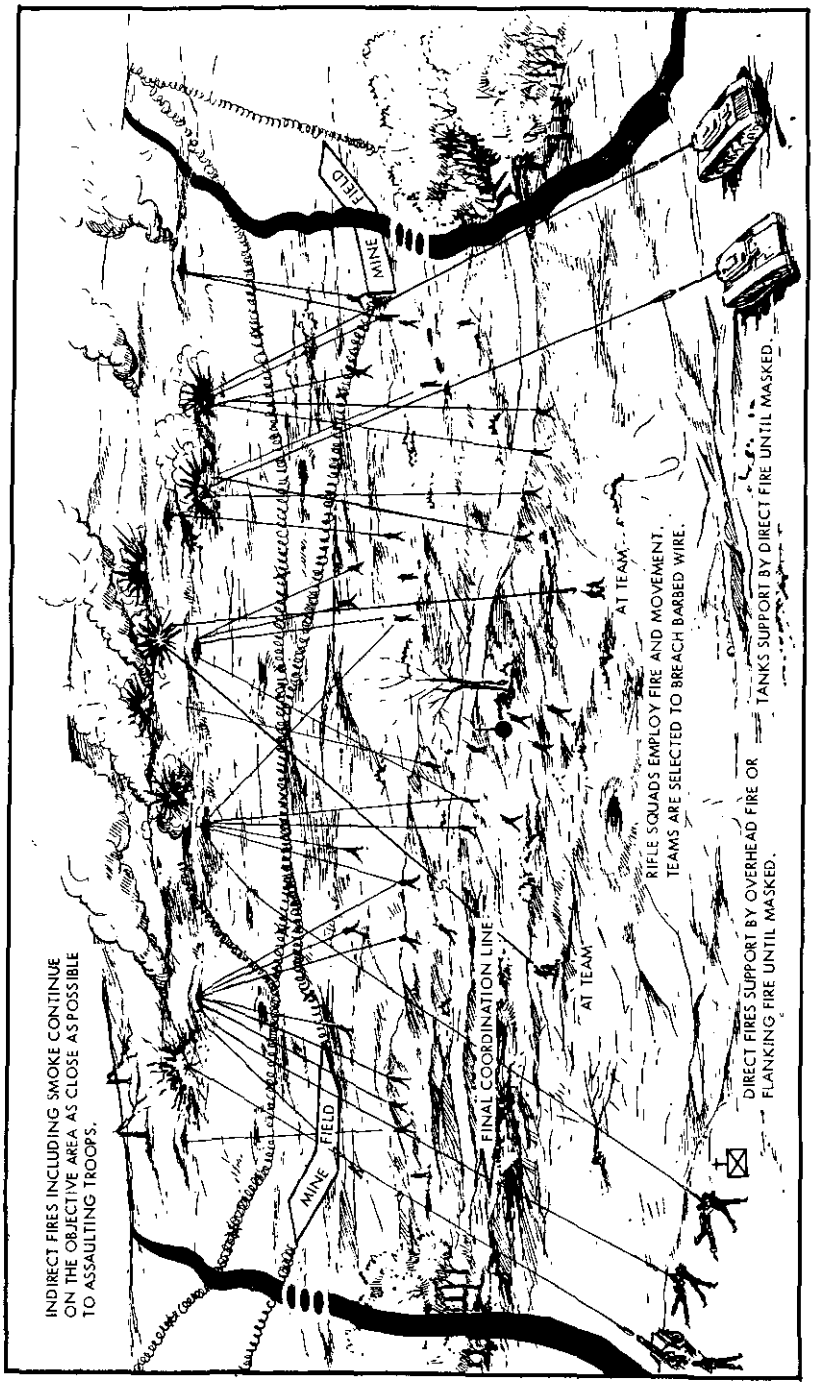

INDIRECT FIRES INCLUDING SMOKE CONTINUE ON THE OBJECTIVE AREA AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE TO ASSAULTING TROOPS.
MINE FIELD
MINE FIELD
FINAL COORDINATION LINE
AT TEAM
AT TEAM
AT TEAM
RIFLE SQUADS EMPLOY FIRE AND MOVEMENT. TEAMS ARE SELECTED TO BREACH BARBED WIRE.
DIRECT FIRES SUPPORT BY OVERHEAD FIRE OR FLANKING FIRE UNTIL MASKED.
TANKS SUPPORT BY DIRECT FIRE UNTIL MASKED.

Figure 7. The assault against a strong enemy defense (schematic)

plished by fire and movement with one element engaging known enemy positions by fire, while other elements make their way through the enemy obstacles, creeping and crawling. When an element is through the obstacles, it will form the base of fire to cover the movement of the other elements through the obstacles. During this action indirect supporting fires are used to the maximum extent to further neutralize the enemy fires. Smoke may be effectively employed to reduce the enemy's observation and effectiveness of fires. When the major portion of the assaulting elements are on the enemy side of such obstacles and within assaulting distance of the objective; the assault is launched with speed, violent action, and maximum use of all available weapons and equipment.

c. Normally special weapons and equipment are made available to the attacking platoon for use against well prepared enemy positions. These items of equipment and weapons may include bangalore torpedoes, flamethrowers, demolitions, tank dozers, and tanks equipped with minefield breaching devices. Such items of equipment will greatly assist in breaching enemy obstacles.

d. Normally, the planned preparatory fires on the objective will damage enemy wire obstacles and remotely controlled antipersonnel weapons employed forward of the position and create paths through enemy minefields. The rifle platoon leader must be continually aware of the effectiveness of these weapons and exploit every advantage created by such fires.

36. Conduct of the Assault When Fire Superiority Has Not Been Gained

(fig. 8)

a. When supporting fires have not been entirely effective, or in cases where sufficient supporting fires are not available to neutralize the enemy fires, and as long as fire superiority remains in the balance, fire and movement is the only means by which the attack can proceed. The movement element will take advantage of cover and concealment (creeping and crawling when necessary), supporting fires, and its own fires. Alternating fire and movement are employed by the element of the unit until fire superiority has been gained or the objective has been seized. The question of fire superiority may remain unsettled even though some elements are within the enemy positions and others are advancing by fire and movement.

b. Under such conditions, maximum use is made of the platoon's organic machineguns, antitank weapons, and grenade launchers in the assault. The terrain and the situation permitting, these weapons should be employed well forward for maximum effectiveness. Desirably, the machineguns should be employed on the

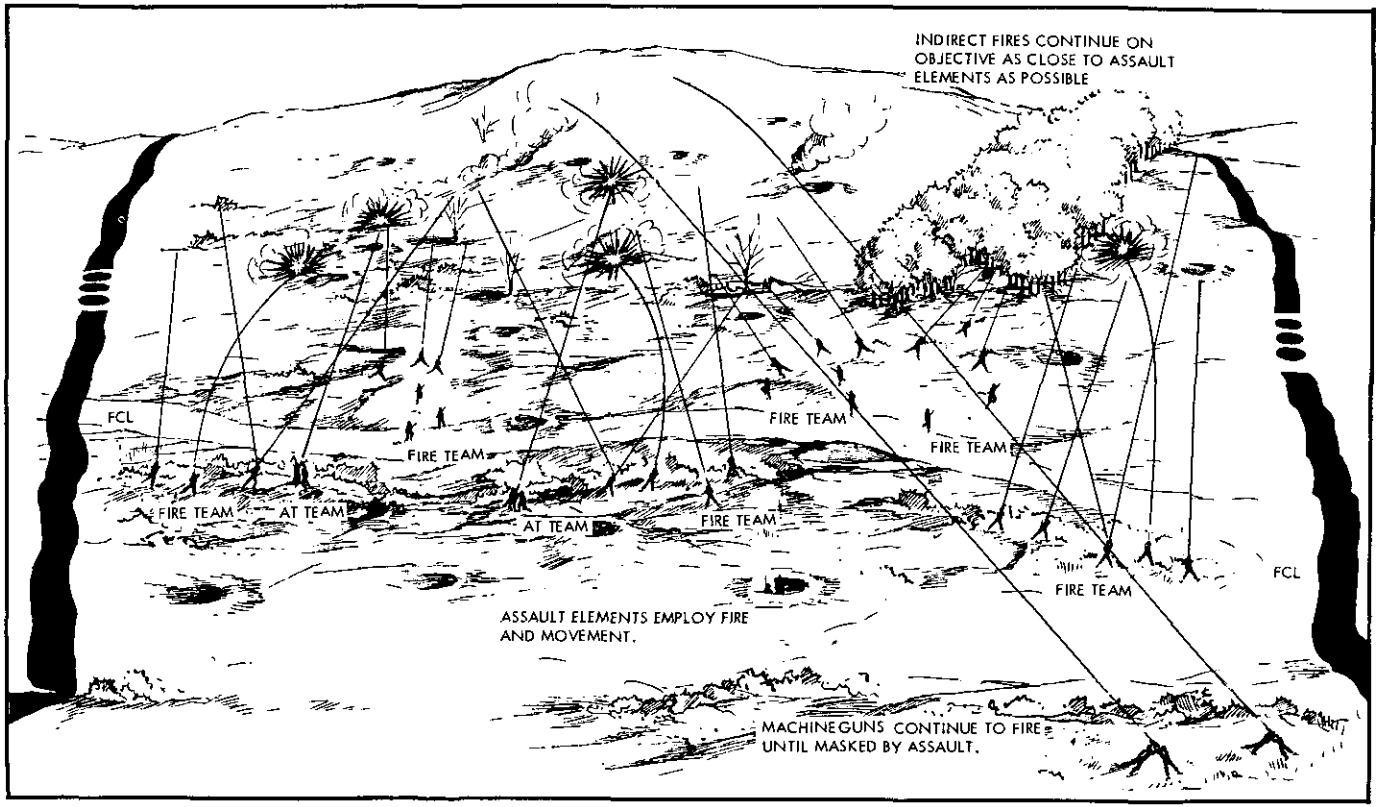


Figure 8. The assault when fire superiority has not been gained (schematic).

flank(s) of the assaulting elements where they can provide the maximum direct fire support before becoming masked by the assaulting elements. The platoon antitank weapons can be effectively employed against known enemy positions and may accompany the assaulting elements or support the assault from available firing positions within close proximity of the objective. The grenade launchers, depending upon the situation and terrain within the objective area, may accompany the assaulting elements or support the assault with overhead fire from positions to the rear of the assaulting elements. Because of the capabilities and firing characteristics of the grenade launchers, these weapons can be effectively employed to make-up for the lack or ineffectiveness of other type indirect fire supporting weapons.

c. Those elements of the assaulting echelon which may have gained a foothold within the enemy positions support the remainder of the assault by fire and the use of hand grenades to kill the enemy in nearby positions.

d. Under such conditions as discussed above, all leaders within the rifle platoon must take aggressive action to exploit the slightest gains and in many cases must demonstrate leadership and aggressiveness by leading their portion of the assaulting elements.

37. Consolidation

a. Immediately after seizing the objective, the platoon prepares to repel a possible counterattack. Squads move directly to their areas of responsibility. Security is posted to warn of the enemy approach. Plans for the consolidation are made prior to the attack and serve as a basis for the consolidation (par. 31). Adjustments are made as the situation dictates. The steps the platoon leader will take once the objective is secure are—

(1) *Estimate of the situation.* The platoon leader makes an estimate of the situation (par. 10). Now that he is looking at the terrain, he determines the validity of the original plan for the consolidation and insures that his platoon has seized the key terrain controlling enemy approaches to his position. There may be changes to the original plan for the consolidation, but regardless of the degree of these changes, the squads and supporting weapons must be positioned without delay.

(2) *Positioning of squads and crew-served weapons.* The platoon leader defines the flanks of each squad on the ground. He insures that squad sectors of fire overlap. Crew-served weapons are given general positions from which to cover dangerous avenues of approach into the area.

b. Rifle squad leaders, assisted by fire team leaders, assign individual positions and sectors of fire. Squad automatic weapons are given sectors of fire and principal directions of fire to cover critical approaches. Men start digging in immediately. The weapons squad leader and leaders of attached crew-served weapons select the exact positions of their weapons. These weapons form the defensive framework of the platoon and have the priority of positions.

c. A brief consolidation report is made to the company commander. The platoon leader inspects the platoon area and continues to improve the defenses.

d. If the attack is to be continued, leaders make the necessary reconnaissance, formulate plans, and issue orders.

38. Reorganization

a. Reorganization is a continuous process. It is given special emphasis upon seizure of the objective. During the attack the platoon will have received casualties, expended ammunition, and perhaps lost equipment.

b. Key men who have become casualties are replaced. Ammunition is redistributed within the squads by the squad leaders and team leaders. The platoon sergeant pays particular attention to the redistribution of ammunition between squads and the evacuation of casualties and prisoners. Casualties are placed in a covered position while awaiting evacuation.

c. Situation, strength, and ammunition reports are given by the squad leaders to the platoon leader, and by the platoon leader to the company commander.

Section III. RIFLE PLATOON IN THE NIGHT ATTACK

39. General

a. A night attack may be made to gain surprise, to maintain pressure, to exploit a success in continuation of daylight operations, to seize terrain for subsequent operations, or to avoid heavy losses by utilizing the concealment afforded by darkness. Night attacks are a part of normal operations and become more frequent as increased enemy firepower makes daylight operations more hazardous.

b. During periods of reduced visibility (fog, snow, or smoke), some or all of the techniques in this section may be applicable to an attack during daylight hours.

c. Night combat is generally characterized by a decrease in the ability to place aimed fire on the enemy; a corresponding increase

in the importance of close combat, volume of fire, and the fires of certain weapons laid on definite targets, or target areas, during daylight; difficulty of movement; and difficulty in maintaining control, direction, and contact. Despite these difficulties, the night attack gives the attacker a psychological advantage in magnifying the defender's doubts, apprehensions, and fear of the unknown.

d. Paragraphs 40 through 48 deal primarily with the techniques used in an attack by stealth, in which the attacker attempts to maintain secrecy and achieve surprise in closing with the enemy before the attack is discovered. Some of the techniques discussed here may be applicable even when the attack is conducted generally as a daylight attack.

e. A night attack may be conducted by stealth, or daylight techniques, or by a combination of the two. The particular techniques employed will depend on such factors as the enemy strength and degree of preparation of his positions, his security measures, the terrain, and light conditions. The situation may permit an attack by stealth to seize an initial objective with the continuation of the attack being made using daylight techniques. Other situations may require daylight techniques for the entire attack.

f. Positive measures are taken to insure secrecy and surprise. In addition to limitations on reconnaissance parties, the movement of vehicles and weapons is held to a minimum. Light and noise discipline is rigidly enforced. Individuals and equipment are camouflaged. Registration of weapons is avoided or accomplished in a way which will not prematurely disclose the forthcoming attack. A significant change in any type of activity is avoided.

40. Control Measures

(figs. 9 and 10)

The degree of visibility will determine the measures necessary to assure control. The following control measures are normally used by the company commander in a night attack conducted by stealth.

a. Tactical Control Measures. Terrain features used as tactical control measures, if not easily identifiable at night, may be marked by infrared equipment.

(1) *Assembly area.* The assembly area may be closer to the line of departure than for a daylight attack.

(2) *Attack position.* The attack position should be in defilade but need not offer as much concealment as in daylight. The area selected should be easy to move into and out of at night.

(3) *Point(s) and line of departure.* A point(s) of departure is normally selected by the company commander. It is

that point(s) on the ground where the platoons cross the prescribed line of departure.

(4) *Route.* The company commander selects the route from the assembly area to the platoon release point. The platoon leader selects the route from the platoon release point to the squad release point. Normally, this selection is made on the basis of observation of the area from a position to the rear of the line of departure. Because visibility will often be limited, the ability to control maneuver will normally require the platoon to move generally in a straight line over open terrain toward its objective. Therefore, the route from the platoon release point to the squad release point is usually announced as a direction by specifying an azimuth and distance. Guides from the security patrols are normally used to assist in the movement to the probable line of deployment (par. 42).

(5) *Release points.* These are points at which attacking elements are relased from the control of the higher commander to the control of their respective leaders. A platoon release point is designated by the company commander and a squad release point is designated by each platoon leader in the assault echelon. The release points are located to provide a gradual deployment of the company during its movement to the probable line of deployment. They should be located as close to the probable line of deployment as possible, while still permitting completion of all lateral movement prior to reaching that line.

(6) *Probable line of deployment.* This is the location on the ground where the company commander plans to complete final deployment prior to moving forward with squads and platoons on line. This line should coincide with some visible terrain feature to facilitate its identification at night. It should be generally perpendicular to the direction of attack and as close to known enemy positions on the objective as it is estimated the company can move without being detected. If the enemy has wire obstacles in front of his position, the probable line of deployment should be on the enemy side of these obstacles.

(7) *Zones of action and objectives.* The company commander normally assigns platoon zones of action by the designation of a portion of the probable line of deployment and an objective for each platoon. Platoon objectives should be designated by unmistakable terrain

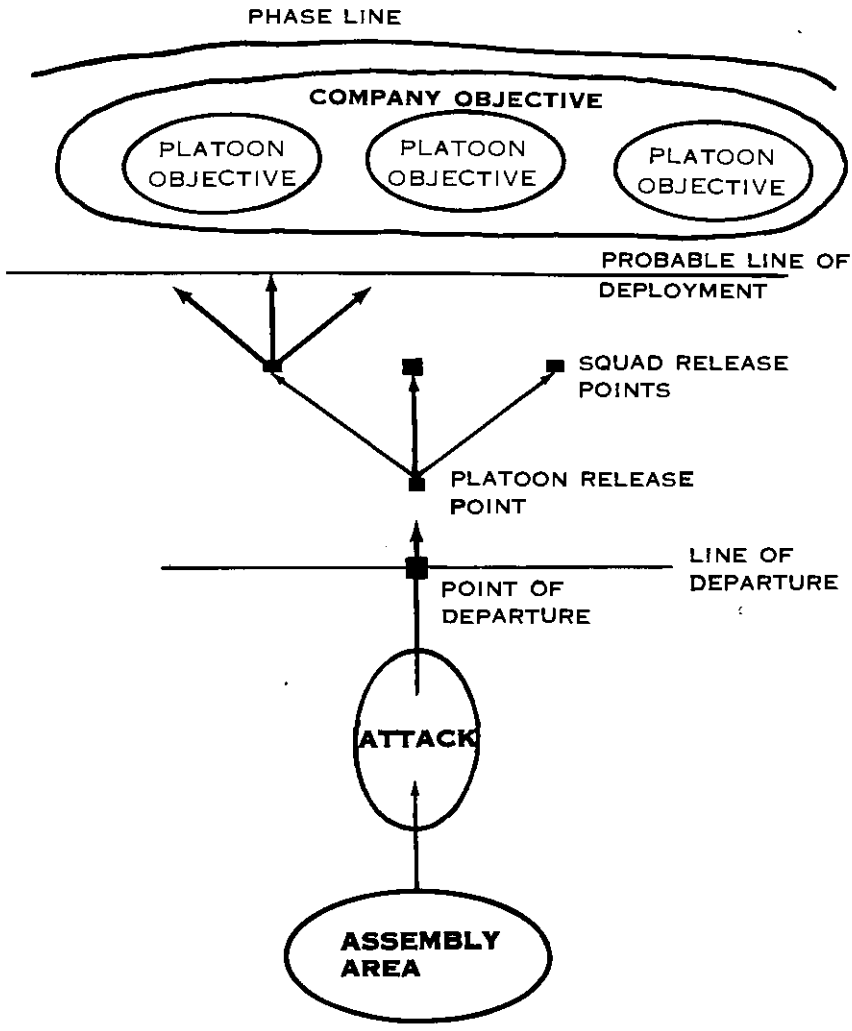


Figure 9. Night attack: company column of platoon columns (schematic).

features. Due to limited visibility and the problems of control, these objectives will normally be smaller than for a daylight attack. Intermediate objectives are not usually assigned.

(8) *Phase line.* A phase line is generally designated beyond the objective to limit the advance of attacking elements. It should be easily recognizable in the dark (a stream, road, edge of woods, etc.), and far enough beyond the objective to allow security elements space to operate.

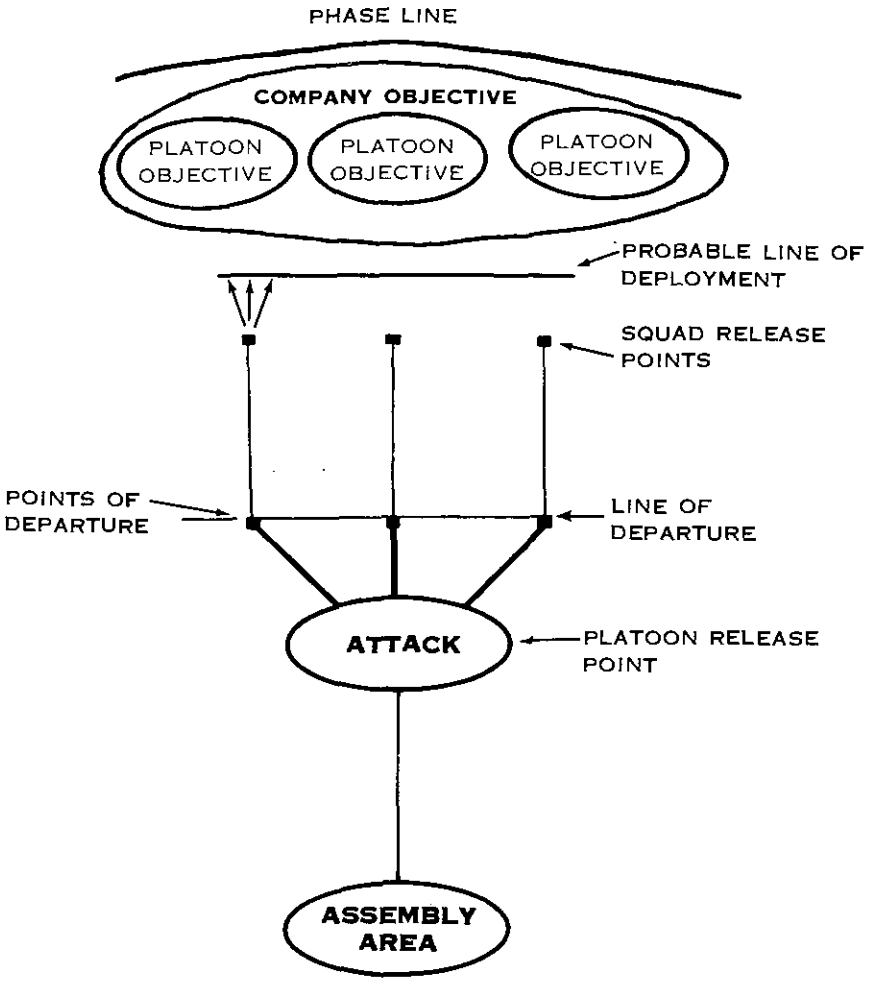


Figure 10. Night attack: company line of platoon columns (schematic).

Fire support units are free to engage enemy forces beyond this line.

(9) *Time of attack.* Often, an attack is made late at night so that initial objectives can be seized by daylight and the attack continued at that time. If the objective is relatively deep, or if the company mission requires immediate continuation of the attack, the attack may begin early at night and continue to the final objective during darkness.

b. Additional Techniques. Additional measures used to facilitate control may include—

(1) Use of azimuth, mortar or artillery marking rounds, or tracers to assist in maintaining direction.

(2) Use of guides and connecting files.

(3) Designation of intervals and distance to be maintained between individuals and squads.

(4) Designation of a base squad on which all other squads will base their movement.

(5) Use of infrared or other night vision devices.

(6) Identification of leaders and friendly troops by use of luminous buttons or tape, white armbands, etc.

(7) The radar sets organic to the company may be used to vector the attacking units to the objective.

c. Communications. The means of communication employed within the company in the night attack are wire, radio, visual signals (infrared, flashlights, and flares), personal contact, and messenger. Wire is laid between the company commander and platoon leaders. The use of radios will normally be restricted until the platoons are deployed on the probable line of deployment or until the attack is discovered, whichever occurs first.

41. Formations

a. Company Formations. To facilitate control, the column formation is used as far forward as practicable. The principal considerations in the selection of the company formation are visibility, distance to the objective, and the anticipated enemy reaction. Based on these considerations, the company normally crosses the line of departure either in a column of platoon columns or in a line of platoon columns.

(1) When visibility is poor, or the distance to the objective is great, or when early contact with the enemy is not expected, the company may cross the line of departure in a column (fig. 9). This formation is retained until the platoon release point is reached, unless earlier deployment is forced by enemy action.

(2) When visibility permits control of a more open formation, or the distance to the objective is short, or early contact with the enemy is expected, it may be desirable to advance from the line of departure in a company line of platoon columns (fig. 10).

(3) When the company is in contact with the enemy and the distance to the objective is short, it may be necessary to have the assaulting platoons move forward from their positions in platoon line. In this case, the line of contact is, in effect, the probable line of deployment.

b. Platoon Formations. The platoon column formation is used from the assembly area to the squad release point, unless earlier deployment is forced by enemy action. The platoon line formation is used from the probable line of deployment forward.

c. Squad Formations. The squad column is normally used until the platoon deploys into the line formation. The file formation is avoided unless extremely limited visibility makes control of the squad column impossible or unless terrain restrictions prohibit the use of the column. Use of the file formation doubles the length of the platoon column and consequently increases the time necessary to complete deployment into the line formation.

d. Positions of Leaders. When in the column formation, leaders normally march at the heads of their units to facilitate control. When in the line formation, they position themselves to best control their units. This location will vary with terrain and light conditions.

42. Security Patrols

a. A security patrol, four to six men in size, is normally sent out by each rifle platoon prior to a night attack to secure the platoon sector of the probable line of deployment. One or two members of each patrol return and rejoin the platoon to act as guides. The platoon patrols will normally be consolidated into a single company patrol. The company commander designates the time and place where returning patrol members must report. He orients the platoon patrol leaders on the route forward to the platoon release point, on the time for elimination of any enemy listening posts encountered en route to the probable line of deployment, on the respective platoon portions of the probable line of deployment, and such other information as they will need to know to accomplish their mission. Platoon leaders inform their patrol leaders of the route from the platoon release point to the squad release point and location of the squad release point. They give specific instructions on the positioning of patrol personnel on the probable line of deployment so these personnel can best aid the platoon in deploying thereon.

b. Enemy outposts on or near the PLD are kept under surveillance and then eliminated just prior to the arrival of the platoons on the PLD. Enemy encountered from the LD to the PLD are eliminated or by-passed as silently as possible.

c. In addition to security patrols on the probable line of deployment, the platoon uses local frontal and flank security while en route from the platoon release point to the squad release point. The size of these security elements varies with the amount of

detailed information of the enemy, terrain, and likely enemy counteraction. The distance at which they operate depends primarily on the platoon leader's ability to control them.

43. Artificial Illumination

a. The company commander normally determines the degree of illumination to be provided. Even though the attack is to be made by stealth, plans are made for the use of available illumination should the need arise during the conduct of the attack, and to assist in the repelling of a counterattack. Available illumination may include searchlights, tank searchlights, and flares delivered by hand pyrotechnics, mortars, artillery, or aircraft.

b. Normally during an attack by stealth, illumination is not used during the advance to the probable line of deployment. During the assault, direct illumination by searchlights and flares may be used to blind and confuse the enemy and to aid in the control of assaulting elements. Illumination used to aid in consolidation after seizure of the objective is normally limited to indirect illumination by searchlights (artificial moonlight). Direct illumination from flares is normally used to assist in repelling a counterattack.

c. Infrared illumination, used in conjunction with appropriate viewing devices, may be used to facilitate movement, control, and firing of weapons.

d. Radar may be used to vector attacking elements into the objective.

e. If illumination is provided throughout the attack, the tactics and techniques employed are generally the same as for a daylight attack (pars. 30–38). However, the problem of control and coordination is greater; dispersion less, and movement slower.

44. Supporting Fires

a. The company commander controls the fires of supporting weapons. If the attack is to be made by stealth, fires are planned in detail, but are delivered only on call. However, some fires may be delivered to maintain the pattern existing prior to the attack. Fires are planned on the objective to support the attack if prematurely discovered. Additional fires are planned to protect the flanks and isolate the objective during the assault and consolidation.

b. If the attack is to be made against a well-fortified position, heavy supporting fires will normally be used. These may include artillery firing direct fire using HE shells with concrete-piercing fuze. Illumination may or may not be used. Fires are planned and delivered generally as in a daylight attack.

45. Organic and Attached Weapons

a. During the movement to the probable line of deployment, the weapons squad normally moves in a squad column at the rear of the platoon. The degree of visibility and the terrain will determine the manner of its employment for the assault. If visibility is poor, the machinegun teams and organic antitank means should follow the assaulting squads at a specified distance and be readily available to the platoon leader if needed to influence the action. If visibility permits and supporting positions are available, these weapons may be employed to support the assault echelon or to protect the flanks or rear. The weapons squad seldom joins in the line of assaulting troops.

b. Portable flamethrowers may be attached to the platoons for a night attack. Flame has a great psychological and destructive effect at night and assists the attacker during the assault by providing some illumination. Flamethrowers are fired only after the assault has been launched.

46. Platoon Plan of Attack

The difficulties of a night attack are overcome by adequate planning and preparation, and thorough training in night operations. Normally, more time is required to plan and coordinate a night attack than a daylight attack. The difficulty of control dictates a simple plan of maneuver.

a. Upon receipt of the warning order for a night attack the platoon leader begins his planning and preparation (pars. 9 and 10).

b. After receiving the company attack order the platoon leader formulates his plan of attack and plans for—

(1) Reconnaissance by key leaders during daylight, dusk, and darkness. Reconnaissance during changing conditions of light assures maximum familiarity with the terrain as it will appear during the conduct of the attack. The company commander will normally limit the size of reconnaissance parties and place limitations on their activities to insure secrecy.

(2) The selection, briefing, and dispatching of security patrols (par. 42).

(3) Control measures (par. 40) and formations (par. 41) from the assembly area to the objective.

(4) Actions at the probable line of deployment (pars. 39*a*(6) and 48).

(5) Actions when the attack is discovered (par. 48*g*).

(6) The conduct of the assault on the objective (par. 48*h*).

(7) The consolidation of the objective (par. 48*i*).

(8) The use of organic and supporting fires (pars. 44 and 45).

c. The platoon leader issues his order following the standard format (par. 11). Although the plan of attack should be as simple as possible, a night attack order is normally lengthy and detailed because of the additional control measures and special instructions required. In conjunction with the order, a thorough terrain orientation is necessary.

47. Preparation for the Attack

Preparation for the night attack is generally the same as for the daylight attack as discussed in paragraph 30. Special emphasis is placed on—

a. Rehearsals conducted both during daylight and darkness. Rehearsals should include formations, audible and visual signals, and the actions of the platoon from the assembly area to the objective.

b. Members of the platoon resting prior to the attack.

c. Carrying only that equipment absolutely essential for the success of the attack. All other equipment should be left behind and arrangements made for its delivery on the objective.

d. Camouflaging individuals and equipment. Equipment which rattles is padded or tied down.

e. Avoiding test firing of weapons and unnecessary movement, or doing this in a way which will not prematurely disclose the forthcoming attack.

f. Insuring that the night vision of the platoon members is not destroyed by the use of lights prior to the attack.

48. Conduct of the Attack

a. The security patrols depart the company assembly area in sufficient time to accomplish their mission prior to the arrival of the platoons at the probable line of deployment. If enemy listening posts are encountered en route to the probable line of deployment, the patrols wait until the time designated by the company commander, then eliminates them as silently as possible and continue forward to secure the probable line of deployment. In the event the security patrols are discovered, they will either destroy the listening posts or withdraw according to the directions that have been issued by the company commander.

b. The platoons move in the company column formation from the assembly area to the platoon release point. At the platoon re-

lease point, they meet their guides from the security patrol and continue to move along their respective routes to their squad release points. The platoon communications wire is connected to the company switchboard prior to crossing the line of departure. Frontal and flank security is used as appropriate from the platoon release point to the squad release point.

c. Once the platoon crosses the line of departure, movement to the probable line of deployment is continuous. The rate of advance is slow enough to permit *silent* movement. Enemy encountered en route to the probable line of deployment are eliminated as silently as possible.

d. If flares are fired during the movement forward to the probable line of deployment, all soldiers quickly assume the prone position until the flares burn out. Close coordination is required on the use of flares. Indiscriminate use of these will result in loss of surprise. If the attack is to be illuminated, friendly flares are fired on signal from the attacking elements (usually after reaching the probable line of deployment).

e. On arrival at the squad release point, the rifle squads are released from the platoon column formation to deploy on line at the probable line of deployment. Members of the security patrols assist the squad leaders in positioning the squads on the probable line of deployment and then rejoin their squads. The weapons squad remains in a column formation in the vicinity of the squad release point.

f. When the platoon is fully deployed, the platoon leader reports to the company commander by wire, radio, or messenger. On order from the company commander, the platoon moves forward *silently* from the probable line of departure, maintaining the platoon line formation and guiding on the base platoon. The weapons squad remains in column and follows the rifle squads at a specified distance.

g. When the attack is discovered, the assault is initiated. The authority to initiate the assault is normally delegated down to and including platoon leaders, and under exceptional conditions down to and including squad leaders. *Scattered fire by small elements of enemy must not be taken as loss of surprise and should not be the signal to start the assault.*

h. The importance of developing a great volume of fire during the assault cannot be overemphasized. It is at this time that fire superiority must be established and maintained. The assault is conducted aggressively. Soldiers shout and create as much noise and confusion as possible. Tracer fire should be used to increase

accuracy of fire and to demoralize the enemy. Preplanned indirect fires are called to isolate the objective. The assault is conducted in the same manner as discussed in paragraph 34 and continues to the military crest on the far side of the objective.

i. When the objective has been seized, the platoons consolidate. Squad and platoon leaders establish their flanks on previously designated terrain features and establish contact with adjacent units. Organic and attached weapons teams move rapidly into predesignated positions. Local security is established, alert for a possible counterattack. This security does not go beyond the phase line (figs. 9 and 10). Ammunition is redistributed, supplies are brought forward, key members of the platoon who have become casualties are replaced, casualties are evacuated, and status reports are made by all leaders. Artillery and mortar FO's continue to request and adjust indirect fire on the enemy and along probable avenues of approach.

j. The conduct of the attack, as described above, requires that the attacking elements reach the probable line of deployment without being discovered. If the attack is discovered prior to reaching the probable line of deployment, the following actions will normally occur:

(1) The company commander will call for preplanned supporting fires on the objective to neutralize the enemy fires. Preplanned illumination will be called for to permit better control and more rapid movement. If the platoons have not yet been released from the company column formation, the company commander will release them at this time and have them continue rapidly to the probable line of deployment.

(2) The platoons should attempt to continue in the column formation to the probable line of deployment, deploy on line as they arrive, and continue as in a daylight attack, treating the probable line of deployment as a tentative FCL. If they are unable to advance in the column formation without accepting excessive casualties, they must deploy and use fire and movement to reach a position from which the assault can be launched (preferably the probable line of deployment), initiating the final assault from there.

(3) As the supporting fires are masked, the company commander shifts them to seal off the objective.

(4) Once the final assault is initiated, the attack is as described in *h* and *i* above.

Section IV. MECHANIZED PLATOON IN THE ATTACK

49. General

a. The mechanized infantry rifle platoon is the basic rifle platoon discussed in this section. The material will pertain (to a degree) to the other types of rifle platoons in relation to:

(1) Attachment of nonorganic APC's.

(2) State of training of the platoon.

(3) Augmentation of maintenance and supply facilities at company level.

b. For purposes of discussion in this section, a mechanized attack is one in which the attacking platoon is mounted in APC for any part of the movement forward of the LD.

c. The material contained in other sections of this chapter applies also to the mechanized platoon. Only the method of moving forward to assault the objective differs.

d. The employment of APC's increases the platoon's combat power. Some of the advantages are armor protected mobility, additional means to carry ammunition and extra weapons, conservation of the infantryman's strength and energy, responsiveness to enemy activities, and psychological effects against the enemy.

e. Troop leading procedures, orders, and fire support planning are generally the same as for the dismounted attack. The primary difference is the habitual use of mission type orders and rapid response to changes in orders necessitated by the rapidly changing situation.

f. APC's operate most effectively over rolling terrain, where their cross-country mobility may be used to the best advantage. In close terrain, such as woods, infantry must dismount to provide protection against tank-hunter teams. Terrain obstacles are considered with respect to track vehicles and wheeled vehicles which carry supporting weapons.

g. Enemy defenses have a considerable effect on the selection of routes and on the ability to move mounted in the attack. Enemy armor, antitank defenses, obstacles, and emplacements having overhead cover are important. They may preclude or restrict mounted movement forward of the LD until they are destroyed or neutralized by dismounted action or other means.

50. Control of APC's

a. The mechanized attack plan includes a loading plan which designates what equipment and troops each vehicle carries. In units with organic carriers, the loading plan is unit SOP. This

simplifies loading and facilitates control at the dismount area. The loading plan is based on the plan for the tactical employment of the rifle and weapons squads. Elements of the weapons squad may be split between two carriers if the tactical plan permits.

b. The squad leader commands his squad's carrier and is responsible for its positioning, movement, camouflage, and all other aspects of its employment. The platoon leader and platoon sergeant command the APC's they ride in, but only while mounted. Leaders insure that the APC drivers know the platoon mission and where and how each APC will move during the time the unit is dismounted. APC's must be secured at all times. The radiotelephone operator and any attached forward observers usually ride with the platoon leader. Other attachments ride as directed by the platoon leader.

51. Control

The platoon leader controls his platoon primarily by radio. Wire, messenger, and visual signals are supplementary means employed under certain circumstances. Instructions for use of these means are contained in SSI's, and SOI's, and other pertinent directives, extracted portions of which are issued to the platoon leader.

a. Formations (app. II). The formations of the mounted platoon are similar to the dismounted platoon formations, both in appearance and combat characteristics (app. II), and those of the tank platoon; thus, combined mechanized infantry-tank formations can be organized without delay or difficulty.

(1) In selecting the formation to accomplish his mission, the platoon leader considers control, security, firepower, terrain, and enemy information. As the platoon advances, it may change formations to fit the situation. During movement in formation, security is achieved by assigning each vehicle commander a definite zone or sector of observation. When an attack is expected from a known direction, formations are chosen which permit rapid concentration of fire in the direction of known enemy locations.

(2) The weapons squad APC is placed in a central location to permit its rapid deployment. To place this squad on the flank or at the rear will cause delay in its dismounted employment. The position of the weapons squad may be changed to conform to the situation. For example, if squads are to dismount just short of the FCL, and the platoon is in line formation, the weapons squad probably should be centrally located in the line.

(3) Changing from one mounted formation to another must be accomplished smoothly, in minimum time, and without loss of momentum. Techniques for changing from one mounted formation to another are shown in appendix II.

b. Tactical Control Measures.

(1) An *attack position* is used more frequently in mechanized attacks than in dismounted attacks. Considerations in selecting an attack position are the same as for a dismounted attack except that the area selected is generally larger.

(2) The *line of departure* is used the same as in dismounted attacks.

(3) The company is normally assigned an *axis of advance* or, less frequently, a *zone of action.* As mechanized operations frequently imply rapid movement, sudden concentration and dispersal, the normal tactical control measure is the axis of advance. However, because of stiffening enemy resistance, a mechanized unit may be required to clear a zone. This may require a combination of mounted and dismounted action.

(4) The main advantage of a mechanized attack is the capability of advancing steadily and rapidly. Since the use of *intermediate objectives* tends to slow an attack, these are designated less frequently for a mechanized attack than for a dismounted attack. This is to reduce vulnerability to enemy nuclear fires, maintain attack momentum and keep the enemy off balance. *Check points* and *phase lines* are particularly useful when it is likely that fire support elements will not be able to keep up with the attack echelon. The need for the close and continuous support of these elements must be weighed carefully against the advantages which might result from the rapid, uninterrupted advance of the attack echelon.

(5) The company commander or platoon leader normally selects a *dismount area* forward of the LD where the attack echelon dismounts from its APC's. The platoon should not be dismounted before it is necessary. In the attack, mechanized infantry dismounts in the closest possible, tactically feasible, defilade position short of the FCL. The assault is normally conducted on foot. Against a weak enemy force equipped primarily with small arms, it may be possible to keep mechanized infantry mounted until reaching the FCL, moving under the cover of artillery fires. The decision as to when and where to

dismount mechanized infantry is made by the platoon leader, based on existing conditions.

(6) The commander selects an FCL to coordinate the assault on the objective. In some situations the FCL and the dismount area may be the same.

52. Platoon Plan of Attack

(fig. 11)

a. Planning and preparation for a mechanized attack begins when the platoon leader receives a warning order and follows the troop leading steps outlined in paragraphs 30 through 38.

b. Upon receipt of the company attack order the platoon leader formulates his plan of attack in the normal manner. In addition, in a mechanized attack, the platoon leader must consider the following:

(1) The loading plan. In mechanized units, this will be SOP. In other units the platoon leader must base his loading plan on the assigned mission and the number of carriers which will be attached, maintaining squad integrity, if possible.

(2) Formations to be used during mounted movement to the LD and forward (app. II).

(3) Tactical control measures (par. 51*b*).

(4) Movement techniques, to include actions taken if the APC's come under effective antitank fire.

(5) Actions during and after dismounting, to include use of the APC's for additional fire support provided the APC's are not exposed to enemy fire.

(6) Use of APC's during consolidated and reorganization on the objective.

(7) Resupply and refueling measures to be taken once the objective is secure.

c. The platoon leader then issues his order as in paragraph 31. The order should be complete, but as simple as possible to allow for maximum flexibility in the attack, which will be fast moving. Often fragmentary orders will be necessary, once the attack is begun, to supplement or modify the plans of attack to meet rapidly changing situations.

53. Preparation for the Attack

Preparation for a mechanized attack is accomplished as discussed in paragraphs 30 through 38 with the following additional considerations:

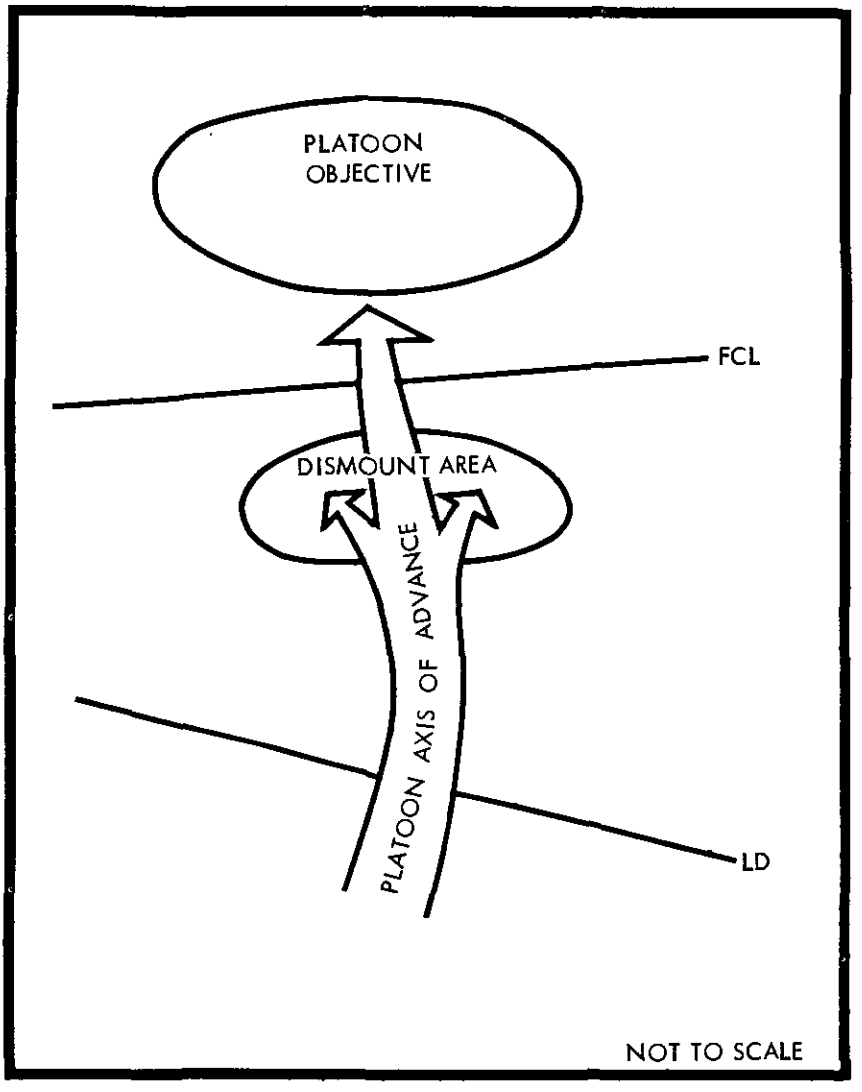


Figure 11. Mechanized rifle platoon in the attack (schematic).

a. Maintenance of the APC's must be performed and checked to insure maximum operational efficiency. Fuel tanks should be filled.

b. Weapons should be test-fired, to include the APC-mounted machineguns. If necessary, the APC ammunition loads are brought up to the prescribed level.

c. The platoon's equipment and baggage are loaded on the APC's as neatly and compactly as possible to allow maximum troop space and freedom of movement for dismounting. SOP loading plans facilitate this.

d. Since the majority of the platoon will ride inside the APC's and will not see the terrain which the platoon is moving on, or the objective area until they dismount, a detailed terrain briefing in the assembly area is necessary to prevent loss of time and lack of orientation when the platoon dismounts.

54. Conduct of the Attack

The rifle platoon leader controls his unit in the attack. While maintaining his platoon's place within the maneuvering force, he varies the platoon formation to meet changes in the situation confronting him (app. II). His major concern is to maintain the momentum of the attack and to position himself within the platoon where he can best control and influence the action. The platoon leader observes the situation, noting any evidence of enemy activity and the progress of friendly units. He keeps the company commander informed of the terrain and enemy resistance encountered, reporting any changes in the situation. He requests supporting fires through the company commander or FO's upon meeting strong resistance or upon locating targets which cannot be engaged or neutralized with his organic platoon weapons. He adjusts artillery fire if a forward observer is not available.

a. Movement across the line of departure is continuous with deployment into the initial platoon attack formation being accomplished on the move. If an attack position is used, the halt is as short as possible.

b. Mounted movement forward of the line of departure is made as rapidly as the terrain, vehicle speed, and supporting fires permit. Vehicle commanders observe from their turrets until forced by fire to close the hatches. During forward movement, the machineguns on the APC's, fire at known or suspected enemy positions.

(1) An attacking unit can frequently locate the enemy by using reconnaissance by fire. Leading elements fire at suspected enemy positions in an attempt to make the enemy disclose his presence by movement or return fire.

(2) Reconnaissance by fire is not conducted until the attack has been launched; otherwise, the attacking unit would prematurely disclose its position together with its intention of attacking. However, during the attack, both assault and support elements make liberal use of reconnaissance by fire to locate and neutralize suspected enemy positions.

c. During the advance, the infantry dismounts rapidly in any action requiring dismounted action. In some situations, a portion

of the movement forward of the line of departure must be made through close terrain, such as woods, in which visibility is greatly reduced. In such terrain, detection of enemy tank-hunter teams is very difficult and infantry must dismount. When the close terrain has been crossed, the advance is continued with the infantry mounted in APC's.

d. Upon reaching the dismount area, vehicles halt under available cover, and the infantry rapidly dismounts. Maximum fires and smoke are placed on enemy positions to cover the dismounting. The APC's machineguns may be used to support the dismounted attack either from hull defilade positions in the dismount area, or advancing by bounds from one hull defilade position to another behind the dismounted infantry. The leader must realize that the APC is not a fighting vehicle and must not be exposed to enemy fire unnecessarily.

(1) Whenever mechanized infantry is required to conduct a dismounted attack (cross the line of departure dismounted), or when terrain, obstacles, or antitank weapons hold up the forward movement of armored vehicles but permit dismounted infantry to advance, the APC's should follow as close as possible behind the dismounted infantry so they will be readily available to continue the attack mounted or assist in the consolidation on the objective.

(2) While the firepower of the APC's may be employed to support a dismounted attack and for antiaircraft protection, every effort must be made to preserve their mobility. It is sometimes necessary to designate an individual to man the machinegun mounted on the APC during dismounted action in order to have the driver free to move the vehicle. This can be done only when the leaders concerned have determined that the APC firepower outweighs the loss of a rifleman per squad in the assault and when enemy fires are unlikely to produce losses in APC.

(3) When the APC's are employed to support the dismounted attack, coordination and control of the fires and movements of the APC's must temporarily be made the responsibility of one individual, normally the platoon sergeant or weapons squad leader.

e. When the platoon reaches the dismount area, the platoon dismounts and moves toward the final coordination line. The dismounting and movement forward are conducted using battle drill (app. III). The assault is then conducted in the same manner as discussed in paragraph 34, 35, or 36. The APC's must be moved

immediately to a defilade position to prevent their destruction by enemy antitank weapons, counterattacking forces, and enemy artillery fire.

f. If the APC's receive unexpected effective antitank fire prior to reaching the dismount area, the platoon leader must determine *immediately* how to safely dismount. Often the safest course is a continued rapid movement if cover is available a relatively short distance forward, especially if enemy artillery and small arms fire are falling around the APC's. If the APC's are located on the crest of a hill when fired upon, it may be possible to quickly back into defilade. If located in the open when fired on and no cover is available for a great distance, the platoon leader may be forced to halt his APC's and dismount his platoon (continued forward movement of the vehicles would mean their probable destruction). Regardless of the circumstances, all available supporting fires, including those of the APC-mounted machineguns, are directed at the known or suspected source of the enemy fire. The platoon leader, forward observers, and leaders of fire support units must be constantly alert for such an occurrence and must react immediately to neutralize the enemy's fire. Smoke rounds fired immediately into the enemy position by direct fire weapons will greatly assist the mechanized platoon in moving to cover and dismounting. Smoke grenades and smoke pots may also be used to obscure the enemy's observation of the platoon.

g. In mechanized operations, many variables are involved and situations change rapidly. All leaders must be alert for the unexpected and be able to quickly change plans to cope with or exploit the new situation. Orders to subordinates must be brief, clear, and accurate.

h. After seizing the objective, the attacking force consolidates and reorganizes in much the same way as in a dismounted attack. Maintenance and refueling of the APC's is accomplished when necessary.

(1) In the consolidation, the APC's occupy hull defilade positions to provide fire support if this does not unduly expose them to enemy antitank fire. When adequate cover and concealment do not exist in the forward positions of the dismounted infantry, the APC's should be kept in defilade where they can protect the flanks and rear, provide antiaircraft protection, and be readily available on call.

(2) Maintenance and resupply of ammunition, fuel, and lubricants for the APC's is accomplished on position if possible or in a covered position in the immediate area.

(3) The APC's may be utilized to transport supplies or evacuate wounded personnel and prisoners if not needed to continue the attack.

55. Night Attack

See paragraphs 39 through 48 for discussion of a night attack by stealth and paragraph 66 for discussion of mechanized infantry and tanks attacking at night. Since using APC's in a night attack would destroy the secrecy of the attack, an attack by stealth would be conducted dismounted. However, if it does not disclose the intentions of the attacking unit, the APC's may be positioned so that the APC-mounted machineguns can support the attack if prematurely discovered and it is necessary to call for illumination. The APC's rejoin the dismounted infantry on the objective and participate in the consolidation as discussed in paragraph 54 as soon as possible.

Section V. MECHANIZED RIFLE PLATOON IN THE ATTACK WITH TANKS

56. General

Paragraphs 57 through 66 set forth methods, procedures, and techniques used in the attack that are necessary for the mutual success of infantry platoons and tanks in a coordinated attack. Mechanized platoons are habitually attached to tank companies and tank platoons attached to infantry companies in armor operations and to a lesser extent in mechanized operation. The material in this section regarding dismounted infantry operating with tanks is also applicable to infantry and airborne infantry platoons when operating with tanks. In the conduct of the attack, the ideal to be achieved is to have the arrival of the mechanized infantry and tank platoons at the objective be timed so as to attain the maximum effects of shock action and armor-protected firepower inherent in the combined arms team.

a. Because tanks desirably lead in the integrated formation, the force commander must consider the distance desired between the tanks and mechanized infantry before starting the assault. This distance is based upon consideration of four factors, the mission, type and capabilities of enemy antitank weapons, type of terrain, and enemy action.

b. Tanks and mechanized infantry normally attack in a closely coordinated, mutually supporting formation. This is not to imply that tanks and mechanized infantry platoons are intermingled in the same formation. Tanks will usually lead, followed at varying distances by the mechanized infantry.

c. The APC is not a tank and must not be employed as such. It is designed to give battlefield mobility to infantry with a degree of armor protection against artillery fragments, small-arms fire, and effects of nuclear weapons. Loss of APC's seriously reduces the mobility of mechanized infantry; the commander must not expose them unnecessarily to antitank fire.

57. Mutual Support

Mutual support between infantry and tanks is continuous. All leaders study, plan, and prepare ways of coordinating and supporting to meet changing battlefield conditions. Coordinated action between platoons within the company is attained by orders to each platoon leader from the company commander and by coordination among platoons.

a. The missions of mechanized infantry platoons and squads are to assist the advance by:

(1) Breaching or removing antitank obstacles.
(2) Assisting in the neutralization or destruction of antitank weapons.
(3) Designating targets for the tanks.
(4) Protecting the tanks against individual antitank measures.
(5) Leading the attack dismounted when necessary.
(6) Providing security for tanks.
(7) Mopping up and assisting in consolidation of the objective.
(8) Protecting the tanks in assembly areas and attack positions.

b. The missions of the tank platoons are to—

(1) Lead the attack when so directed.
(2) Neutralize or destroy hostile weapons by fire and maneuver.
(3) Clear paths for dismounted infantry through wire and antipersonnel minefields.
(4) Neutralize fortified installations with direct fire.
(5) Support by direct fire when dismounted infantry lead the attack.
(6) Provide antitank protection.

58. Methods of Attack

a. There are three general methods of employing tanks and mechanized infantry together in the attack—

(1) Tanks and mechanized infantry attack on one route.

(2) Tanks and mechanized infantry attack on two converging routes.

(3) Tanks support by fire only.

b. During an attack any one or more of the three methods may be used. As the combat situation changes, it may become necessary to employ a method other than the one used initially. The attacking force must be capable of changing from one to another as the attack progresses.

c. In fast moving situations the advance of tanks and mechanized infantry can be coordinated by combining the combat formations of each into one mutually supporting formation—tanks preceding mechanized infantry with the entire attacking force moving forward together. The selection of the attack formation for the tanks and mechanized infantry will be based on considerations of the mission, enemy situation, and terrain and troops available as well as on the firepower, security, and control desired by the commander in a given action. See appendix II for appropriate formations.

d. In slower moving situations, when the tanks are advancing from one covered position to another, the mechanized infantry may be moved by bounds behind the tanks. Movement by bounds increases the security of the mechanized infantry and reduces the time they are exposed to direct-fire weapons. If the tanks are moving in mass, mechanized infantry usually will follow, by bounds, one or two covered positions to the rear. If the tanks are moving by bounds, mechanized infantry will usually occupy a defilade position behind the rearmost tank elements. In either event, the speed of movement of the mechanized infantry element must be regulated by the company commander to insure that it is in a position to join the tanks in the assault on the objective.

e. The attacking element moves rapidly toward the objective using the selected method of attack. When compelled by enemy action, movement is accomplished by fire and movement.

f. Regardless of the method or combination of methods used, the following apply:

(1) Tanks must be employed so that maximum use is made of their battlefield mobility, armor-protected firepower, speed, and shock action.

(2) The rate of advance of the attack should be the maximum rate permitted by the terrain and enemy situation.

(3) The mechanized infantry should remain mounted as long as possible so that:

(*a*) The attacking force can move forward at the speed of the tanks and APC's to close with and destroy the enemy.

(*b*) The battlefield mobility of both tanks and mechanized infantry will be retained.

(*c*) Casualties will be minimized in areas swept by small arms and artillery fire.

(*d*) Artillery airbursts can be employed in support of the attacking force.

(*e*) A degree of protection will be afforded against the effects of nuclear weapons.

(*f*) The energy of the mechanized infantry will be conso that it will be better able to fight when needed.

(4) Mechanized infantry normally dismount when it is necessary for it to:

(*a*) Prevent its destruction by enemy antitank fire.

(*b*) Breach or remove obstacles which prevent forward movement of the tanks.

(*c*) Assist in the neutralization or destruction of antitank weapons that are holding up the forward movement of the tanks and APC's.

(*d*) Take part in an assault through heavily wooded areas or very rough or broken terrain.

(*e*) Lead an assault across defended rivers that cannot be crossed by APC's.

(*f*) Take part in an assault through fortified areas or through defended towns and villages that cannot be bypassed.

(*g*) Assist the tanks forward under certain conditions of low visibility and restricted fields of fire (darkness, smoke, heavy woods, broken terrain, etc.).

(*h*) Mop up a defended objective and assist in the consolidation.

59. Tanks and Mechanized Infantry Attack on One Route

a. General. In the attack on one route the entire attacking force uses the same approach to the objective. The infantry platoon may be either mounted or dismounted using different techniques in the employment of the force.

b. Advantages. This method promotes coordination and control, as the entire attacking force is moving in one direction on

Figure 12. Not used.

the same route. Compared with other methods, it permits close mutual support among elements of the attacking force.

c. Favoring Conditions.

(1) Attack over open terrain devoid of vegetation capable of concealing armored vehicle movement.

(2) Only one likely avenue of approach is available.

(3) The objective cannot easily be flanked.

(4) Control of the unit is a problem and can be improved only by use of the most easily controlled method of attack.

d. Tanks With Mechanized Infantry.

(1) *Tanks and mechanized infantry employed in mass* (fig. 13).

(*a*) The attack of tank and mounted mechanized infantry platoons can be coordinated by combining the combat formation into one mutually supporting, integrated formation. The distance between elements in the formation is based on the tactical situation. Tanks lead so they can use their firepower. The mechanized platoon is located to the rear of the tanks so as not to unduly expose the APC's. This technique is used against enemy positions not strong in antitank weapons.

(*b*) The arrival of the tank and infantry platoons at the objective should be so timed as to provide close mutual support during the assault.

(2) *Tanks with mechanized infantry, movement by bounds* (figs. 14 and 15).

(a) Mechanized infantry platoons follow the tanks by bounds. This technique of movement increases the security of the mechanized infantry but reduces the speed of the advance. When compelled by enemy action, tanks may advance as a unit from one terrain feature to the next, the mechanized platoon leader must rapidly move his platoon into defilade behind successive terrain features.

(*b*) Control must be exerted to make certain that tanks preceded infantry onto the objective in one coordinated assault.

e. Tanks With Dismounted Infantry.

(1) When terrain, obstacles, or enemy antitank weapons restrict or stop the movement of tanks but permit dismounted infantry platoons to move forward, tanks may

temporarily support by fire while the infantry advances. When the dismounted platoon attack has progressed sufficiently or an obstacle has been removed, the tanks may move forward, pass through the infantry, and lead the assault. This type of action must not be confused with the method of attack whereby tanks support by fire only, as the intent is for the tanks to participate in the assault of the objective.

(2) When artillery or mortar airbursts are used to support the attacking force, the infantry platoon must be kept well to the rear of the tanks.

(3) The APC's should follow closely behind the dismounted infantry, to be readily available when needed to continue the attack mounted or to assist in the consolidation of the objective. They may move forward by bounds or follow the attacking force.

60. Tanks and Mechanized Infantry Attack on Two Converging Routes

(fig. 16)

a. General. The attacking force uses two different routes for the approach to an objective. Two techniques may be used: tanks with mechanized infantry on both routes, and tanks on one route with dismounted infantry on a separate route. Coordination of the assault is more difficult than in other methods.

b. Advantages. This method normally achieves the maximum surprise effect, particularly when the elements on both routes are mounted. It provides a greater opportunity for the attacking force to strike the enemy flanks or rear, and it has the advantage of forcing the enemy to fight in two directions. When tanks are employed on both routes, hostile tanks are more often forced to expose their vulnerable sides and rear to fire from one of the friendly tank elements.

c. Favoring Conditions.

(1) More than one avenue of approach is available.

(2) At least one avenue of approach provides concealment.

(3) The objective can be flanked.

(4) Control of the unit is not a major problem, thus closer coordination can be attempted.

d. *Tanks With Mounted Infantry on Both Routes.*

(1) A force of both tanks and infantry attacks along each route. On each route the infantry may be either mounted or dismounted as the situation dictates.

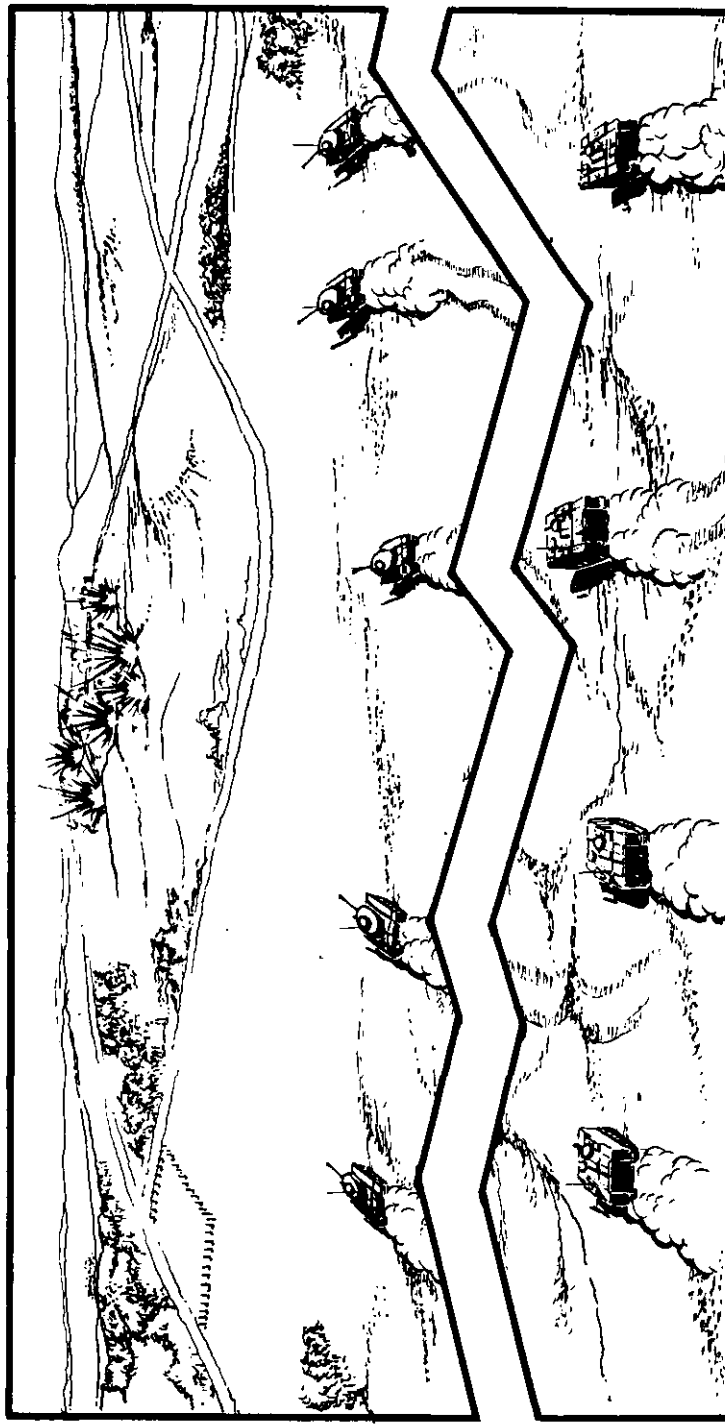


Figure 13. Mounted infantry and tanks both advancing in line formation.

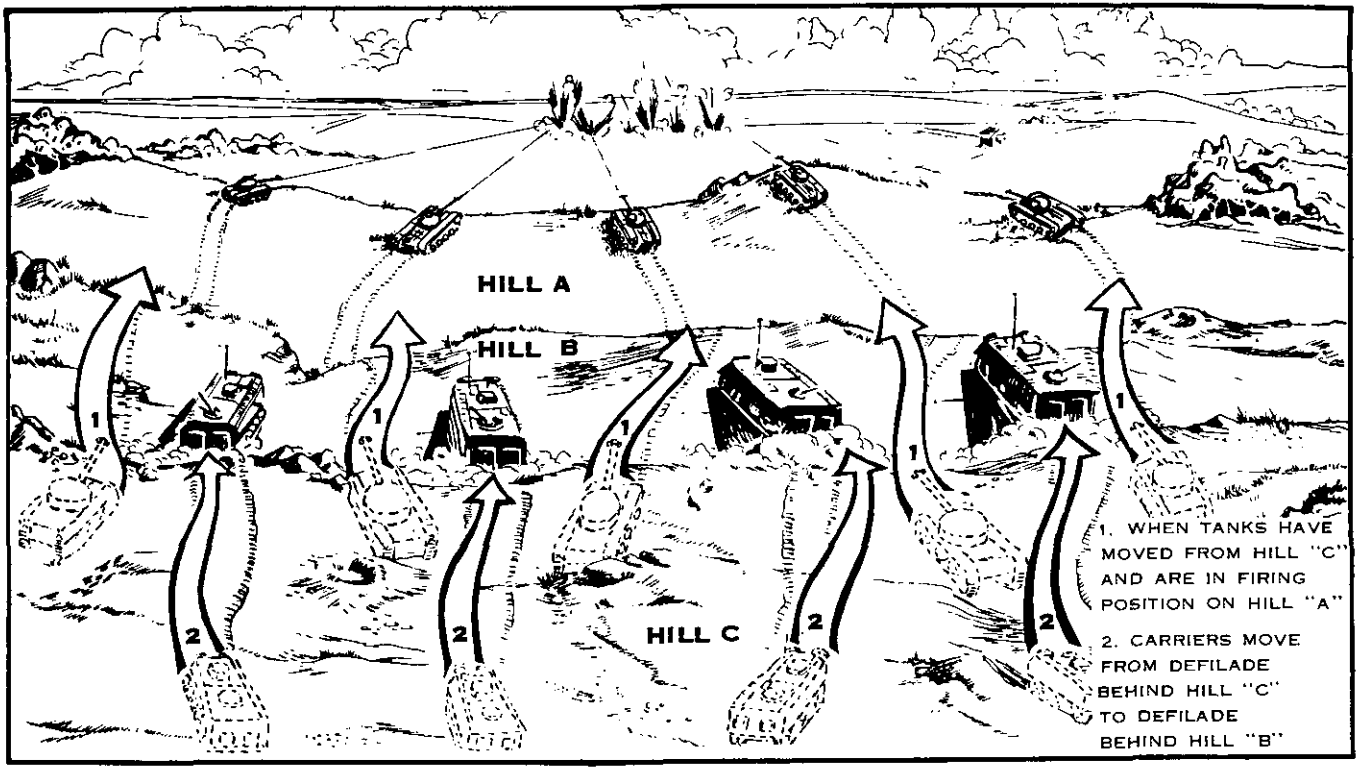

HILL A
HILL B
HILL C
1
2
1. WHEN TANKS HAVE MOVED FROM HILL "C" AND ARE IN FIRING POSITION ON HILL "A"
2. CARRIERS MOVE FROM DEFILADE BEHIND HILL "C" TO DEFILADE BEHIND HILL "B"

Figure 14. Mounted infantry following tanks by bounds.

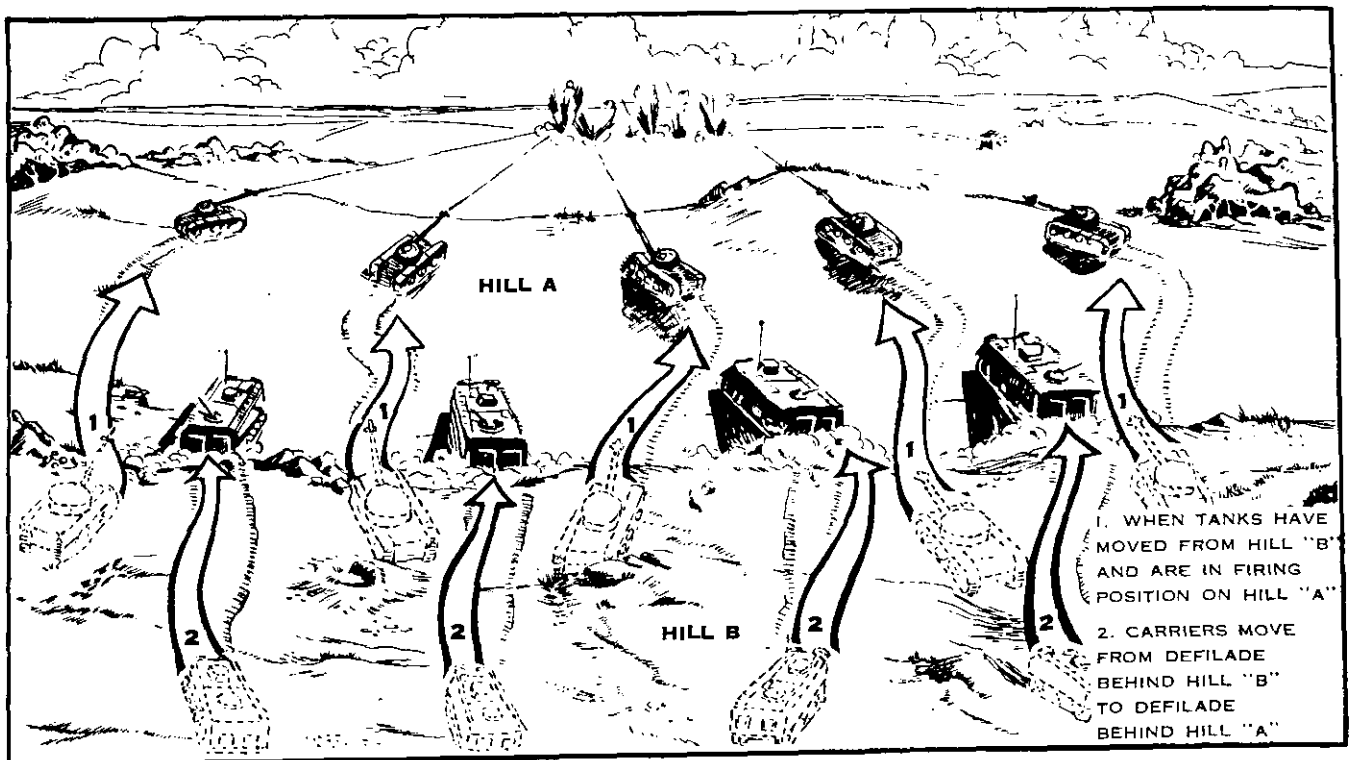

HILL A
HILL B
1
2
1. WHEN TANKS HAVE MOVED FROM HILL "B" AND ARE IN FIRING POSITION ON HILL "A"
2. CARRIERS MOVE FROM DEFILADE BEHIND HILL "B" TO DEFILADE BEHIND HILL "A"

Figure 15. Mounted infantry following tanks by bounds (intervening terrain feature).

Figure 16. Dismounted infantry and tanks attacking on two converging routes.

(2) The movement on each route of tanks and infantry is governed by the same considerations as when a single route is used.

e. Tanks on One Route With Dismounted Infantry on a Separate Route.

(1) Normally a force of both tanks and mechanized infantry attacks along each route. Situations may arise in which it is necessary to employ infantry dismounted on one route and tanks on another route.

(2) When the attacking force is held up by enemy antitank fire or obstacles, dismounted infantry may move along a covered route impassable to tanks in order to strike the enemy flank. The tanks initially support by fire, then move on their route to the objective. The elements on each route should arrive on the objective at approximately the same time, or the attack may be so timed that the tanks arrive first, under artillery or mortar airbursts, with the infantry following.

(3) This technique is employed when one avenue of approach is suitable for tanks but unduly exposes the dismounted infantry while the other can be used by dismounted infantry but restricts or prevents the movement of tanks.

(4) In addition to difficulty in control and coordination, use of this technique has the disadvantage of reducing mutual support, particularly of the tanks by infantry, during movement to the objective.

61. Tanks Support by Fire Only

(fig. 17)

a. In this method the infantry attacks to seize the objective, and the tanks support the attack by fire only. Conditions that make it necessary to use this method are—

(1) Obstacles prevent the tanks from moving in the attack, and an objective must be seized to protect the reduction of the obstacles. For example, it might be necessary for infantry to seize a terrain feature from which the enemy is covering a minefield or roadblock that is holding up the advance of the tanks.

(2) Ground impassable to tanks must be seized.

b. When unfordable streams must be crossed, tanks support mounted mechanized infantry by fire only. APC's can cross streams unfordable for tanks; therefore, the tanks should take up

defiladed firing positions from which they can support by fire the crossing by the APC's.

c. This is the least desirable of the three methods and should be employed only when necessary. Even though the shock action of the tank is lost, its direct fire support can assist the infantry by taking over the neutralization effect of indirect fires once the lifting or shifting of indirect fires is required. As soon as the obstacles are breached or a suitable avenue of approach is uncovered, the tanks must move rapidly to join the infantry on the objective.

62. Actions of the Mechanized Platoon and Squad Leaders

a. A mechanized platoon leader controls his unit in the attack on the objective. He will vary the platoon formation to meet changes in the situation confronting him (app. II). His major concern is to push the attack and close with and destroy the enemy.

b. The platoon leader positions his APC within the platoon where he can best control the platoon. He observes in all directions, noting any evidence of enemy activity and the progress of other elements and keeps the company commander informed of the terrain and enemy resistance encountered, reporting any changes in the situation. While mounted, the platoon leader may fire the machinegun mounted on the APC.

c. The actions of the mechanized infantry squad leader while mounted include:

(1) Direct the movement of his APC in a sound tactical manner.
(2) Fire the machinegun mounted on the APC.
(3) Maintain contact with the platoon leader (visual or radio).
(4) Make constant battle reconnaissance.
(5) Keep the platoon leader informed of the situation.

63. Conduct of the Assault

a. General. The desired goal in the assault is to bring the maximum firepower and shock action of tanks, infantry, and artillery to bear upon the enemy simultaneously to destroy him as rapidly as possible with the fewest casualties, either troop or vehicular, to friendly forces. The commander must achieve this complex goal by forceful and decisive action coupled with judgment in employing the combined arms team. The assault of a defended position by tanks and mechanized infantry in cooperation with artillery may take three forms—

Figure 17. Tanks support by fire only.

(1) *Tanks and dismounted mechanized infantry assault in coordination.* Regardless of the method of attack used to bring the force into a position to assault, the assault is conducted as a coordinated effort. As the tank and infantry platoons approach the objective, the objective is brought under heavy supporting fires. The tanks maintain their rate of advance, and increase the volume of fire by saturating the objective with machinegun fire and the main tank gun. At this time the mechanized infantry platoon increases its speed in moving to dismount positions to overcome the loss of time in dismounting and to maintain the proper tank-infantry coordination in the assault. As the force reaches the final coordination line, supporting fires are lifted or shifted to the flanks or rear of the objective to prevent escape of the enemy or to break up counterattack formations. The fires of infantry and tank weapons replace the indirect supporting fires. The mounted mechanized platoon, behind the tanks, stops in the closest, tactically feasible, hull defilade position short of the FCL and the infantry dismount. The dismounted infantry close with and destroy the enemy in close combat and protect the tanks from individual antitank weapons and tank-hunter teams. Whenever possible, the machineguns of the APC's are used to support the assault until their fires are masked by advancing riflemen. The assault is conducted in the same manner as discussed in paragraphs 30 through 38. The shock action of assaulting tanks and infantry is multiplied by rapid movement and heavy volumes of fire, including the use of hand grenades. During this time the tanks continue to saturate the objective with machinegun fire, destroying enemy positions and weapons with the main tank gun. This assists the dismounted infantry in its clearance of the objective. As the tanks arrive at the far edge of the objective, fire is directed on the enemy beyond the objective. Effective placement of this fire reduces materially the enemy's capability of organizing and launching a counterattack. As soon as the objective is clear, the tanks are moved to defensive positions dominating avenues of enemy armor approach and prepare to repel counterattacks or to continue the attack. Mechanized infantry is disposed in accordance with orders previously given by platoon and squad leaders. The infantry platoon may provide security for the tanks and cover avenues of enemy infantry

approach into the position. Further actions to consolidate the position are carried out. Maintenance and refueling of vehicles, and resupply of ammunition is accomplished where necessary.

(2) *Tanks support by fire only.* In this situation dismounted infantry will conduct the assault. Tanks will be used to support by fire with full consideration given to the long range and rapid rate of fire of the tank weapons and the precision and control with which these fires can be delivered.

(3) *Tanks and mechanized infantry dssault while mounted.*

(*a*) Under some circumstances the assault may be conducted by mounted movement all the way to the objective. An example of this would be after a nuclear strike on the enemy position and/or against hastily prepared positions with weak antitank defenses. To enable such an assault, tanks must be included in the assault force and enemy strength must be effectively neutralized. In such a case a dismount area is selected on the objective. A final coordination line is also selected by the company commander short of the objective even when the commander plans for his force to move straight onto the objective; this is essential since enemy action may force dismounting of infantry earlier than intended.

(*b*) When the dismount area is on the objective, APC and tanks move rapidly to that area (with hatches closed) under artillery and mortar fires using airbursts. When they reach the dismount area, supporting fires are shifted or lifted, and the infantry dismounts immediately to eliminate any enemy remaining on the objective. The exact timing of the shifting of fires is of great importance. The last rounds of the concentration may be colored smoke to indicate to the infantrymen inside the APC when to dismount.

b. Coordination and Cooperation in the Assault. The company commander employs tanks and mechanized infantry platoons in a manner which takes maximum advantage of the best characteristics of both elements. Maximum destructive effect on the enemy is obtained only when careful coordination and complete cooperation is effected among the individuals of the tank and mechanized infantry platoons and their leaders, and between platoons and the company commander. Coordination must be effected to—

(1) *Maintain proper distance between tanks and dismounted infantry in the attack.* Platoon and squad leaders,

through proper *control* of vehicles in their unit, can insure that proper distances are maintained. Proper distance between tanks and dismounted infantry will not permit the enemy to man his weapons, destroy supporting dismounted infantry, and attack unsupported tanks at extremely close ranges. In addition, APC's will not be exposed to fires they are not designed to withstand. An enemy gunner may or may not distinguish between two types of tracked vehicles at this time. Further, infantry mounted in APC's has little power to counterattack.

(2) *Provide for vehicle dispositions on the objective.* Tank or APC commanders and drivers are given specific directions as to the placement of their vehicles upon consolidation. Vehicles will be needlessly exposed to enemy fire when vehicle commanders and drivers are not aware of their mission following the assault, and proceed to move aimlessly about the objective as a result of confusion. This will cause unnecessary and uncovered movement on the objective.

(3) *Provide for APC's to be left in covered positions.* In preparing to dismount the squad, the APC commander must tell the driver where to place the vehicle immediately after the squad dismounts. This location must be in defilade, to preclude its needless loss from antitank or other fires.

(4) *Dismount at the proper time.* Vehicle commanders, platoon leaders, or the company commander must order the dismounting of the infantry according to the attack order or enemy action. This decision is made dependent on the tactical situation at the time. Remaining mounted too long may expose the vehicle and its squad to needless destruction by short-range weapons manned by determined enemy soldiers.

c. Rejoining of APC's and Squads on the Objective. Once the assault has cleared the objective, it will be necessary to bring APC's forward to rejoin their units. Any of several techniques may be employed by the platoon leader but the method used must be coordinated with vehicle drivers before the mechanized infantry dismounts.

(1) *Radio.* All APC's are provided with vehicular radios that net with the radios carried for use in dismounted actions. If this technique is employed, the range of the transmitting station must be considered and the driver must constantly monitor the radio.

(2) *Messenger.* A dismounted messenger may be sent to the position occupied by the APC's to guide them to their respective units. This method depends on a route clear of the enemy for its success. It is also the slowest method.

(3) *Pyrotechnic devices.* A pyrotechnic signal may be fired to indicate to vehicle drivers the time to move and the approximate location of the unit. This technique is dependent for success on constant scanning of an area by the driver, visibility in the area, availability of pyrotechnics to which this meaning may be assigned, and possession within the unit of the signal device.

(4) *Vehicles follow dismounted infantry.* Under conditions of limited visibility and when effective enemy antitank fires are unlikely, APC's may follow dismounted mechanized infantry keeping the last man in sight. This technique has the advantage of keeping the APC close to its unit with little time lost in remounting, but may result in its loss if the unit becomes involved in a fire fight.

64. Consolidation and Reorganization

a. General. The actual occupation of the objective is the critical stage of the attack. This is the stage during which control is most difficult and the time when an aggressive enemy delivers a carefully planned and coordinated counterattack, covered by all available supporting fires. When a unit has assaulted and seized an assigned objective, it immediately *consolidates* and *reorganizes.* In nuclear warfare, the actual seizure of the objective may often be followed by either a continuation of the attack or a rapid move to dispersed locations from which the unit can dominate the position, but avoid presenting a lucrative nuclear target. Such actions will be in accordance with plans made by the company commander.

b. Consolidation. As soon as leading elements of the assaulting forces reach the objective, the following actions are taken with the greatest possible speed to destroy remaining enemy resistance, prepare to move to dispersed locations, avoid presenting nuclear targets, or to continue the attack on order.

(1) The leading tanks take up deployed positions from which they can dominate the position and destroy visible enemy weapons and troops by fire. Tank commanders employ hand grenades against dug-in enemy troops where the use of the tank guns might endanger friendly troops. If enemy tank-hunters are active, the leading tank unit commander may request artillery and mortar air bursts over his position until friendly infantry arrive. Both

tanks and infantry should avoid the skylines; tanks must not cruise aimlessly.

(2) The dismounted infantry platoon closes with enemy on the objective using the techniques of battle drill making maximum use of the tanks. During the period of "mopping up" conducted by the infantry platoon the company commander may designate tanks to support the infantry platoon in this phase of the operation.

(3) Continue the attack. The platoon leader makes a map and visual reconnaissance of the terrain between him and the next objective and issues any fragmentary orders that may be necessary, pending receipt of the company commander's order. Whenever necessary, guides are sent back to meet supply vehicles, company maintenance section, and medical aidmen. No action will be taken, however, that will interfere with immediate preparations for continuing the attack.

(4) Squads on the objective continue to organize and improve their defensive arrangements until ordered to continue their advance. Measures to be employed against enemy counterattacks are determined before the attack and are included as part of the attack order.

c. Reorganization. Reorganization pertains to the unit. It includes all the actions taken to restore maximum combat effectiveness and control. It may include—

(1) *Reports.* All subordinates report accomplishment of their mission, and the status of troops, equipment, and supplies.

(2) *Replacement of casualties.* So far as possible, losses are replaced.

(3) *Evacuation.* Arrangements are made for the evacuation of troop casualties, prisoners of war, and damaged equipment.

(4) *Supply.* Ammunition and equipment are redistributed as required; requests for additional ammunition, fuel, and other supplies are initiated; any supplies received are issued if time permits.

(5) *Communication.* Contact is restored with any units temporarily out of communication.

65. Infantry Riding Tanks

When tanks and infantry must advance rapidly and no APC's are available, infantrymen may ride on the tank decks. This technique is effective when trying to regain contact with the enemy,

when exploiting the effects of nuclear weapons, or when the terrain and the enemy situation indicate fewer casualties will result from rapid movement than from a dismounted advance. However, infantrymen mounted on tanks are extremely vulnerable to all types of fire, and they reduce the maneuverability and firepower of the tanks. The infantrymen must dismount as soon as they come under effective small arms, artillery, or antitank fire, and when dismounted infantry action is required. When tanks are moving in column and contact with the enemy is imminent, infantrymen do not ride on the first two tanks in column. When infantrymen are riding on the tanks, rifles should not be slung across the back, as enemy action may require the immediate return of fire.

66. Tanks and Mechanized Infantry in Night Attack

The successful conduct of a night attack is dependent upon detailed prior planning. Night attacks should be characterized by simplicity, secrecy, and surprise. The issuance of orders for a night attack of an organized position should be accomplished sufficiently in advance to permit leaders to reconnoiter attack positions, routes to the attack positions, and the line of departure, as well as the area over which the attack will be conducted. Army aircraft should be used for reconnaissance forward of the line of departure. The objective may be illuminated by any means available, including tank-mounted searchlights, should this be considered necessary. Radar may be used to vector attacking elements to the objective. The coordination between tanks and mechanized infantry should be accomplished during daylight. The reconnaissance forward to the attack position and the line of departure should be conducted jointly by the tank and mechanized infantry commanders. If a passage of lines in contact is required, the company commander accompanied by his organic and attached platoon leaders, personally visit the unit through which they will pass. Specific items of information desired include—

a. Precise route to be used through the forward position.

b. Location of known enemy positions, particularly tanks or antitank weapons.

Section VI. RIFLE PLATOON IN THE ATTACK OF A BUILT-UP AREA

67. General

Fighting in built-up areas necessitates training in special techniques and with special equipment. This section will include the considerations and techniques for this type of combat.

a. Definitions.

(1) A built-up area is any grouping of buildings such as villages, towns, cities, or factories.

(2) Block-type construction is that type construction in which few or no gaps exist between buildings. Business districts of larger towns and cities are examples.

(3) Detached and semi-detached building areas are the areas of towns and cities where buildings are spaced relatively close together.

(4) Isolated housing areas are found on the approaches to towns and cities where individual or small groups of houses are located with large open areas surrounding them, such as farms or suburban houses.

b. Characteristics of Built-Up Areas.

(1) *Concealment and cover.* Built-up areas provide excellent concealment and cover for both the attacker and defender. The defender has an advantage since the attacker must expose himself to move through the built-up area. The effectiveness of cover depends upon both the density of the buildings and the nature of their construction. Buildings constructed of inflammable material are easily burned and may prove to be fire traps for the troops using them. Heavy stone or reinforced masonry buildings with thick walls offer excellent cover even when bombardment has reduced them to rubble. Buildings with basements or two or more stories offer good overhead cover.

(2) *Limited observation and fields of fire.* Observation and fields of fire are limited except for streets, alleys, parks, and other open areas. This means that both the defender and the attacker will have these open areas covered by fire. The direct fire supporting weapons are much further forward to support the assault squads. The severely restricted observation increases the difficulty of control and adjustment of fires.

(3) *Restricted and canalized movement of vehicles.* Combat activities are subject to ambush and close range attack. The infantry must provide close-in protection and all-round security.

(4) *Proximity of opposing forces.* The fighting will be at very close quarters. In all probability, the enemy will be just across the street or in the next room. Effective close support by artillery and combat aviation is limited because of the proximity of opposing forces.

(5) *Difficulty in locating the origin of hostile fire.* Sound magnified and echoed between buildings and along streets, together with smoke and dust from explosions, makes it difficult to observe and locate the origin of hostile fire. This means the attacker will have to place fire or smoke on all suspected enemy positions during the progress of the attack.

(6) *Employment of smoke by small units.* Smoke is employed by small units to provide concealment, to limit observation, and to achieve deception and surprise. Smoke will remain effective in built-up areas longer than in open terrain.

(7) *Use of incendiaries.* This is frequently the quickest, surest, and most economical method of dislodging an enemy from a building. However, the attacker must use incendiaries carefully because a spreading fire may become an obstacle to his advance.

(8) *Radio transmission capabilities.* Radio transmission capabilities will be reduced due to building mask and presence of steel poles, telephone wires, etc.

c. Phases. There are three continuous phases of combat in built-up areas:

(1) *Phase I* of the attack is designed to isolate the city by seizing terrain features which dominate approaches to the city. The attacker secures positions outside the built-up area to support the entrance and the step-by-step capture of the objective.

(2) *Phase II* consists of the advance of the assault forces to the built-up area and the seizure of enough buildings for a lodgement on the near edge of the town. This reduces or eliminates the defender's ground observation and direct fire on the attacker's approaches to the town. The attacker uses the cover and concealment afforded by these buildings in the foothold area to displace weapons forward and commence his systematic clearance of the area.

(3) *Phase III* is the systematic house-by-house, block-by-block advance through the built-up area. While doing this, particular attention must be paid to maintaining control. Plans are made to insure each building is thoroughly searched, units have adequate means of communications, and prompt resupply can be effected.

68. Control Measures

Control in city fighting is difficult because of restricted observation and the fact that fighting breaks down into small independent actions. City fighting requires small unit initiative, aggressiveness, and decentralization of control to their leaders. The company commander controls his platoons by—

a. Phase Lines. These lines, often streets, streams, and railroads at right angles to the direction of advance, are used to control and coordinate the forward movement of the attacking units. Units promptly report their arrival at phase lines and continue the attack.

b. Boundaries. Restricted observation and difficulties of control make it necessary to assign boundaries down to the platoon level. The frontage for a rifle company may be as small as one city block in denser portions of block-type areas. In order to provide easy and definite identification in such areas, boundaries are placed along the side of the street with the street inclusive to one unit. This size zone may be provided a rifle platoon based on the degree of resistance expected, complexity of the built-up areas and ease of control. For ease of control and best effect, a platoon may clear one block with one unit taking the left side of the street while the other clears the right side.

c. Objectives. These are definite and limited. In phase two (gaining a lodgment), companies are normally assigned the first block of buildings as objectives. The final objective is the far edge of the built-up area. Platoons are given a portion of the company objective, usually one side of a city block, or a part of a specific installation.

d. Communications. Communications between the company and platoons is by radio, wire, messenger, and visual and sound signals. Since radio transmissions are hampered by the buildings, wire is laid to each of the attacking platoons. The wire should be laid through holes in the buildings instead of along streets to help protect it from shellfire and tracked vehicles. Messengers should also move through buildings for safety.

69. Techniques

Since combat in cities usually breaks down into small independent actions, the key to city fighting is keeping squads intact to overwhelm the enemy at each point. Whenever squads or individuals move, fires are used to cover their movement.

a. General Techniques.

(1) Attack systematically, section by section, the city, town, or village. Adherence to this principle reduces the

possibility of hostile centers of resistance remaining active in rear of the advancing units.

(2) Choose a route of advance which will not mask the covering fire. Streets, alleys, vacant lots, and open areas afford the best fields of fire for the defender and should be avoided. Open spaces that cannot be avoided should be crossed quickly; smoke may assist this movement. Parts of buildings can be blown or pushed by tanks across streets and alleys to provide cover for attacking troops.

(3) Select cover in advance. The attacker should hug walls and move rapidly from cover to cover. He should roll quickly over rooftops and walls and not go over them upright. Avoid firing over the top of cover unless the firer's silhouette blends with the background.

(4) When selecting positions for firing or observing from within a building, the soldier should insure he is back within the shadows and does not silhouette himself in front of windows.

(5) Close coordination and mutual support with supporting weapons and adjacent units are required. Friendly supporting automatic weapons place fire down streets and across open areas. Rifle and automatic weapons fired through walls, floors, and ceilings will destroy the enemy in cellars and upper floors. All fire must be closely coordinated with the maneuver element.

(6) Since house-to-house fighting lends itself to surprise situations, security is maintained in all directions and from above and below.

(7) The support squads and platoons follow the assault echelon closely. They protect the flanks and rear of leading units and are prepared to function as assault units. The great amount of cover and concealment available to the attacker and the reduced fields of fire available to the defender permit the support elements of the assault to be much farther forward than is possible on more open terrain.

(8) Buildings cleared by friendly troops are marked with chalk, strips of cloth, etc., or guards are posted. This system must be the same for all units fighting within the built-up area.

b. Squad Techniques. The assault squads are divided into two groups—the covering party and the searching party. Each is composed of a fireteam with both grenadiers usually in the covering party.

(1) The covering party protects and facilitates the advance of the searching party. It places fire on the building to be entered by the searching party and any adjacent buildings which may contain enemy who could fire on the searching party during its advance. The covering party displaces on order of the squad leader under the protection of the fires of the searching party.

(2) The searching party enters and searches all buildings which the squad is responsible for clearing. The searching party is kept small to avoid confusion while fighting in the close quarters of the buildings. When the searching party is composed of a fire team, the team operates as two two-man searching teams. The squad leader normally accompanies the searching party.

c. Individual Techniques.

(1) Both the grenade launcher and hand grenades are used by the soldier to precede his entry into any area which might contain enemy. To take full advantage of the available cover, the soldier should be trained to throw grenades with either hand from any position. Field expedient explosive devices such as satchel charges may be used in conjunction with grenades. The use of such devices must be controlled in order to prevent fires which would create an obstacle to the attacking unit.

(2) Riflemen should be trained to fire quickly and accurately from any position. If portions of a room are not visible to an entering man, the rifleman should carry his weapon on the side which will naturally point the muzzle toward the hidden portion of the room where any target will most likely appear.

(3) A searching team of two men is normally given the mission of clearing one room. One man should have an automatic weapon. One man throws a grenade into the room. After it explodes, he enters quickly and places his back against the nearest wall. From this position, he covers the entire room. The second man follows the first man and searches the room in detail. They notify the fire team leader when the room has been cleared.

(4) At times it will be necessary to create openings in walls to permit movement from one room or building to another. Creating these openings can be done by handtools, explosives, or weapons.

d. Building Entry. If possible, buildings are cleared from the top down. There are three methods of entering and clearing buildings.

(1) *Entry on uppermost level.*

(*a*) Entrance through the upper part of a building is preferable as it is easier to work down than up. A cornered enemy may fight desperately, but an enemy forced down to the ground level may be tempted to withdraw from the building and expose himself to the fire of covering units or weapons.

(*b*) Various means may be used to reach the top floor or roof of a building such as ladders, downspouts, vines, or the roofs or holes blown in walls of adjoining buildings. In many instances, soldiers can climb onto the shoulders of their comrades and reach high enough to pull themselves up. Toggle ropes are extremely useful. These are short ropes from four to six feet long and about ½-inch in diameter with an eye (loop) at one end and a short stick at the other. Several toggle ropes can be joined to form wall-scaling ropes. By attaching several of these ropes to a grappling hook, a man can scale a wall, swing from one building to another, or gain entrance to an upstairs window by throwing the grappling hook through the window and allowing it to catch on the window sill or objects in the room.

(2) *Entry on middle floor.* If entry on the top floor is not possible, entry should be made at the next highest point, using techniques described in (1) (*b*) above. The floor of entry is then thoroughly cleared. Floors above the point of entry are cleared before clearing those below.

(3) *Entry on ground level.* When entering at ground level, it is preferable to use demolitions, artillery fire, tanks, or other weapons to blast an entryway. Doors and windows are often boobytrapped or covered by fire.

70. Employment of Organic and Supporting Weapons

a. Machineguns. The rifle platoon initially employs its machineguns to provide covering fire during the attack to seize a platoon foothold in the area. Once a foothold is secured, these weapons are quickly moved into the built-up area and are kept well forward in the platoon formation where they can provide supporting fire for the platoon's attack. Machineguns fire grazing fire down streets and alleys and across open areas. These fires destroy any enemy driven into the open and prevent the enemy from using streets, alleys, and open areas as routes for supply, reinforcements, or maneuver.

b. Organic Antitank Means. The organic antitank means provide antitank protection for the platoon. They can also blast holes in walls and knock out enemy strong points. They are well adapted to city fighting because of their light weight, versatility, and penetrating power. The organic antitank means move into the fringe of the built-up area with the assault squads. During the continuation of the attack in the built-up area, they are moved with or directly behind the assault squads to be readily available to fire on targets of opportunity.

c. AT Squads. The AT squads from the weapons platoon are used initially as in any attack. After the seizure of a foothold, they are kept well forward and may be attached to rifle platoons. They are capable of blasting holes in very thick walls and destroying enemy positions. If obstacles within the built-up area do not restrict the movement of these weapons, they will normally be attached or in direct support of the rifle platoon.

d. Mortars. Because of their high trajectory, the 81-mm and 4.2-inch mortars are employed against targets behind buildings which cannot be reached by the artillery. Superquick and time fuzes are effective against rooftop positions. Delayed action fuzes are used to penetrate thin roofs and neutralize enemy positions in the top floors of buildings. During the attack to seize a foothold, the mortars fire scheduled fires on the built-up area. During the continuation of the attack to clear the city, forward observers move with the assault units to adjust fire on targets requested by the infantry leaders.

e. Artillery. Artillery weapons, particularly 155-mm and 8-inch, provide an excellent means of destroying or neutralizing bunkers, heavy fortifications, or troops in reinforced concrete buildings. They use either direct or indirect fire. Artillery can also be used to neutralize enemy positions on rooftops and in the top floors of buildings.

f. Tanks. The infantry will locate targets and direct tank fire, neutralize or destroy antitank guns, assault and reduce positions under the covering fire of tanks, and protect the tanks from tank-hunter teams. The tanks will support the movement of the infantry by use of their cannon and machineguns to fire into buildings in order to drive the enemy away from his firing positions, reduce street barricades, establish roadblocks and barricades, if necessary, and attack slowly and methodically. The tanks are retained under cover until required and then called forward to assist in the attack.

71. Platoon Plan of Attack

a. Detailed intelligence information is essential when planning the attack. The company commander should provide the sub-

ordinate leaders with maps showing the location of all buildings, streets, and alleys. Leaders augment information received from higher headquarters by observation posts and patrols. Every effort should be made to secure information of the type of construction of each building, the interior layout of the buildings, location of fences, and walls around the buildings and lots, and the location of the openings in the buildings. When preparing his plan and conducting the attack, the platoon leader is guided by the following general rules:

(1) *Avoid streets and open areas.* Streets and open areas provide the best fields of fire available in built-up areas. Move through buildings, sewage or subway systems whenever possible to take advantage of their cover and concealment. Ladders and planks are useful in crossing from one building to another.

(2) *Keep supporting weapons and reserve elements well forward.* Because of the limited observation and fields of fire, supporting weapons must be with or close behind the assault squads to provide effective support. The rifle platoon often retains a reserve squad. To keep the reserve squad readily available, it moves by bounds, one or two buildings behind the assault squads.

(3) *Assign definite and limited objectives.* To prevent confusion as to who clears buildings and to provide for frequent squad and platoon consolidation and reorganization, the platoon leader assigns the squads only a limited number of buildings to clear at any one time. To reduce confusion, the platoon leader gives the squad leaders sketches of the area with buildings numbered. Because of the likelihood of capture, these sketches should contain nothing higher than the squad attack plan.

(4) *Do not bypass buildings.* In all strongly defended built-up areas, buildings are considered as key terrain since they dominate the streets and other open areas. The attacker does not bypass buildings and take a chance of being attacked from the rear. It is necessary to enter and search every building as the attack progresses. Buildings will be assigned as objectives to rifle squads and, if the building is large enough, to platoons.

b. Since the platoon leader cannot be in a position to control the entire platoon, he decentralizes much of his control to the squad leaders. Combat in cities thus depends to a great extent on the initiative and aggressiveness of the squad leaders. The

platoon order contains the details of the coordination between the squads and is normally more detailed than the usual attack order. All leaders are alert to take advantage of situations as they develop.

c. In the attack, the platoon leader controls his squads primarily by personal contact and visual signals (pyrotechnics are particularly effective). Radios are usually restricted in operational range by buildings.

72. Preparation for the Attack

(fig. 18)

The platoon prepares for the attack of a built-up area in the normal manner (par. 30). Certain additional preparations must be made because of the nature of house-to-house fighting.

a. Necessary special equipment for ease of movement not normally carried by the platoon must be obtained or constructed from locally available material. This equipment includes toggle ropes and grappling hooks for climbing into inaccessible windows and onto roofs, etc., and stiles and ladders for climbing over walls and other barricades and bridging gaps between buildings.

b. Extra grenades, if available, should be issued to all men and demolitions (such as satchel charges) prepared.

c. Men should carry only that equipment necessary for their individual protection. Normally, the web equipment with ammunition pouches, canteen, poncho, first aid packet, bayonet, helmet, and gas mask should be sufficient. Any other equipment which might hinder movement should be left in the assembly area during the attack.

d. All men should be briefed as thoroughly as possible on the layout of the built-up area and on details of construction so they will know what to expect and be able to keep themselves oriented within the buildings. Each squad should be organized into a searching party and covering party and each party carefully briefed on their duties.

e. Detailed coordination with adjacent platoons and supporting units such as tanks and AT teams is necessary to prevent attacking units from becoming entangled in close quarter fighting and to insure that all areas are cleared and none bypassed.

f. Panels should be carried to mark friendly houses; this will permit placement of close supporting air and artillery fires upon enemy strongpoints, etc.

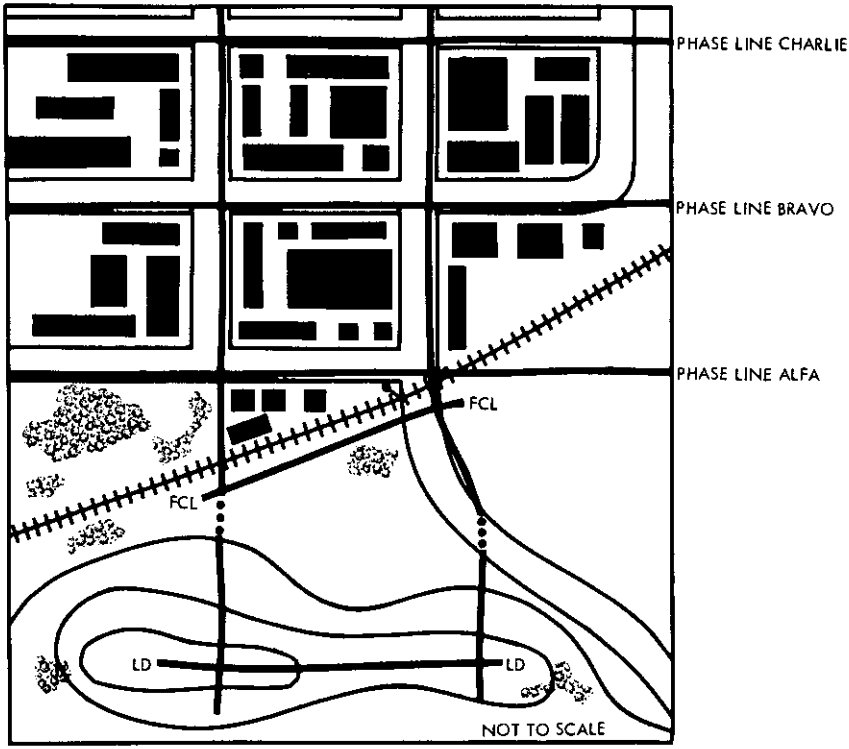


Figure 18. Rifle platoon in the attack of a built-up area (schematic).

73. Conduct of the Attack

The attack is conducted in three phases as outlined in paragraph 67*c*. The attack does not stop or slow down between phases II and III. There is actually no clear line of demarcation between the ending of the second phase and the beginning of the third. When each unit has secured its foothold, it immediately begins to displace its reserves and supporting weapons into the foothold area to support the third phase of the attack.

a. Seizing a Foothold. The attack to seize a foothold in a built-up area is conducted similar to the attack on an organized position over normal terrain. Favorable avenues of approach are exploited. Supporting weapons are used to neutralize the enemy in the foothold area and to isolate this area from support and reinforcement from other parts of the built-up area. Artillery and heavy mortar fire are used to crater the ground to provide cover for assault troops. These weapons may also be used to blow gaps through tactical and protective wire where more efficient means are not available. Mortars may fire smoke shells to screen adjacent areas and further isolate the foothold area. When attacking troops have reached the ACL, supporting fires are lifted or shifted as required and leading elements move without delay to the first buildings to

be seized. These buildings are rapidly cleared of the enemy and then the displacement of supporting units and weapons into the foothold area begins.

b. Continuation of the Attack. After seizure of the foothold, the attack is continued systematically building by building. Indirect fires and supporting direct fire weapons provide overall cover. Platoons attack with squads covering each other by fire; squads of the covering party covering the searching party. Covering small arms fire is placed on all windows, doors, apertures, or any other suspected enemy locations.

c. Mopping Up.

(1) In strongly defended built-up area, the leading elements must mop up as they advance. Each building in the assigned zone must be entered and thoroughly searched for enemy. This procedure protects leading elements from surpise attacks on their rear, secures their lines of communication, and prevents support and reserve units from becoming involved in unexpected mopping up operations which may hamper their prompt employment elsewhere.

(2) When a built-up area is lightly defended, it may be desirable for leading elements to push forward rapidly to seize critical installations. In this situation, support elements and reserves are given specific mopping up missions to clear sections of the area which have been bypassed or only hastily cleared by the leading units. Close coordination between the leading units and the mopping up units is essential to prevent them from becoming engaged in a fire fight with each other because of mistaken indentity.

d. Consolidation. Consolidation takes place as each unit objective is taken. Attention is given to placing weapons and men in firing positions to cover all avenues of approach. At this time, plans are made for the continuation of the attack. When the entire built-up area has been secured, the consolidation will be such as to prevent the enemy from regaining a foothold within the buildings.

Section VII. RIFLE PLATOON IN THE ATTACK OF A FORTIFIED AREA
(fig. 19)

74. General

The discussion of techniques in paragraphs 75 and 76 is concerned primarily with the attack against permanent fortifications.

These techniques may be used in an attack against improved field fortifications such as emplacements with overhead cover and bunkers. These techniques are modified if the situation, shortage of time, and lack of special equipment dictate an attack utilizing normal offensive tactics (pars. 30–38).

a. Fortified positions are normally organized in width as well as depth. The attack of such positions is characterized by assault on a narrow front to isolate individual fortifications and to effect a penetration.

b. In organizing a defensive position, the defender utilizes the best defensible terrain with good observation and natural obstacles

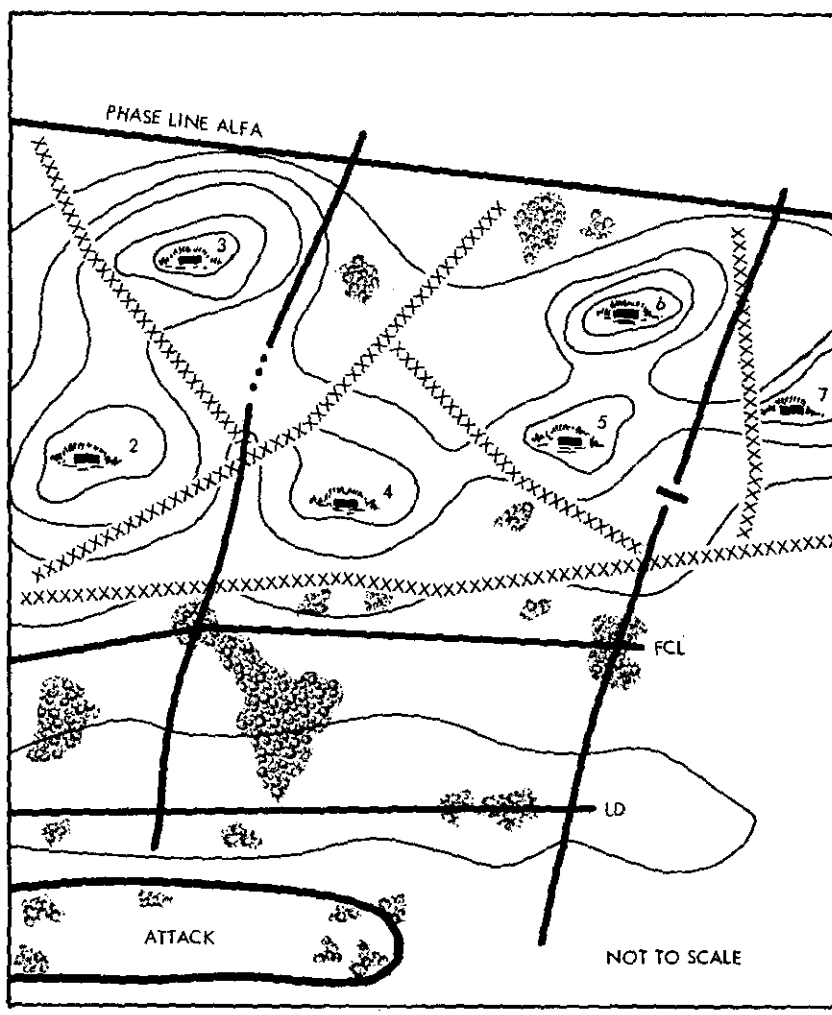


Figure 19. Rifle platoon in the attack of a fortified area (schematic).

and locates his bunkers to support each other mutually. He has preplanned defensive fires, concealed positions, antipersonnel and antitank obstacles, and detailed counterattack plans. He may employ personnel in outside emplacements when "blind spots" exist within the defensive positions.

c. Artillery, tanks, and tactical air take an active part in the reduction of enemy fortifications. Fires of weapons not organic to the rifle platoon are coordinated by the company commander with the advance of the platoons. These fires are maintained on the platoon objective(s) and are shifted to succeeding objectives as the attack progresses. The weapons platoon is normally employed in general support.

75. Special Preparations

a. When the enemy bunkers have been specifically located and the platoon has been assigned a bunker or series of bunkers as an objective, the rifle platoon must be prepared to attack with or without special equipment. However, in most cases special equipment will be available. The platoon leader's preparation for the reduction of each individual bunker includes:

(1) *Detailed planning for the attack.*

(*a*) Formations, routes, and order of march from the line of departure.

(*b*) Methods to breach encountered obstacles.

(*c*) Selection of the initial firing position for the platoon fire support element.

(*d*) Direction of the maneuver and the assignment of the three tasks to be accomplished by the platoon maneuver element.

(*e*) Utilization and control of fires of the organic, attached, and supporting weapons.

(*f*) Plans for the consolidation on the objective and the continuation of the attack.

(2) *Organization and assignment of special equipment.* The platoon leader organizes his platoon into a fire support element and a maneuver element and assigns the special equipment to the squad accomplishing task two.

(3) *Rehearsals.* Time permitting, rehearsals are conducted over similar terrain.

b. When the rifle platoon has been assigned a terrain feature as an objective and there are suspected but unlocated bunkers in the area, the platoon leader makes special preparation in the

event one or more of the suspected bunkers are encountered. These special preparations include—

(1) Informing the squad leaders of the suspected bunkers and other possible bunker locations.

(2) Arming the platoon with additional WP and HE hand grenades.

(3) Tentatively designating the elements of the platoon to comprise the fire support and the maneuver elements, and assigning special tasks to the maneuver element.

(4) Assignment of available special equipment to the squad having the mission of final neutralization of the bunker.

76. Conduct of the Attack

The attack against a bunker is conducted by fire and maneuver. The fire support element of the platoon neutralizes known or suspected enemy bunkers and other emplacements whose fire can hinder the maneuver. The maneuver element moves forward under the cover of these supporting fires to a position to assault the bunker with firepower, flame, and demolitions. If possible, the direction of maneuver should be such that the maneuver element assaults the bunker from its blind side.

a. The Fire Support Element.

(1) The platoon fire support element is composed of all or part of the organic crew-served weapons of the rifle platoon and any other attached weapons. The size of the fire support element is determined by the number of embrasures or outside positions to be taken under fire.

(2) The platoon fire support element, in conjunction with the fires of nonorganic supporting weapons, neutralizes the fires of the bunker under attack, enemy in open emplacements around the bunker, and locations suspected of containing enemy who can hinder the maneuver. Supporting fires also disrupt or destroy enemy communications and resupply means (wire, radio antenna, communications trenches/tunnels).

(3) Designated platoon direct fire support weapons fire directly into the bunker embrasure(s).

(4) Either HC or white phosphorus (WP) is used to screen embrasures and likely observation posts.

(5) As the fires of the platoon fire support element and other supporting weapons become masked by the maneuver element, the weapons shift their fires and continue to neutralize by fire known and suspected enemy locations.

b. The Maneuvering Element (fig. 20). The maneuver element performs three tasks in closing with and neutralizing an enemy bunker. The assignment and performance of the tasks must be flexible to meet each existing situation or problem confronting the platoon.

(1) *Task number one.* Places fire in and around the bunker, normally from a closer range than the platoon fire support element. The fires serve to augment the fires of the platoon fire support element. The squad accomplishing this task may also assist in accomplishing task number three.

(2) *Task number two.*

(*a*) Neutralizes the bunker by assaulting, using firepower, flame, and demolitions.

(*b*) This task is accomplished by the squad employing both organic weapons and the special equipment.

(*c*) Equipment should be so distributed that casualties or equipment malfunctions will not cause the assaulting

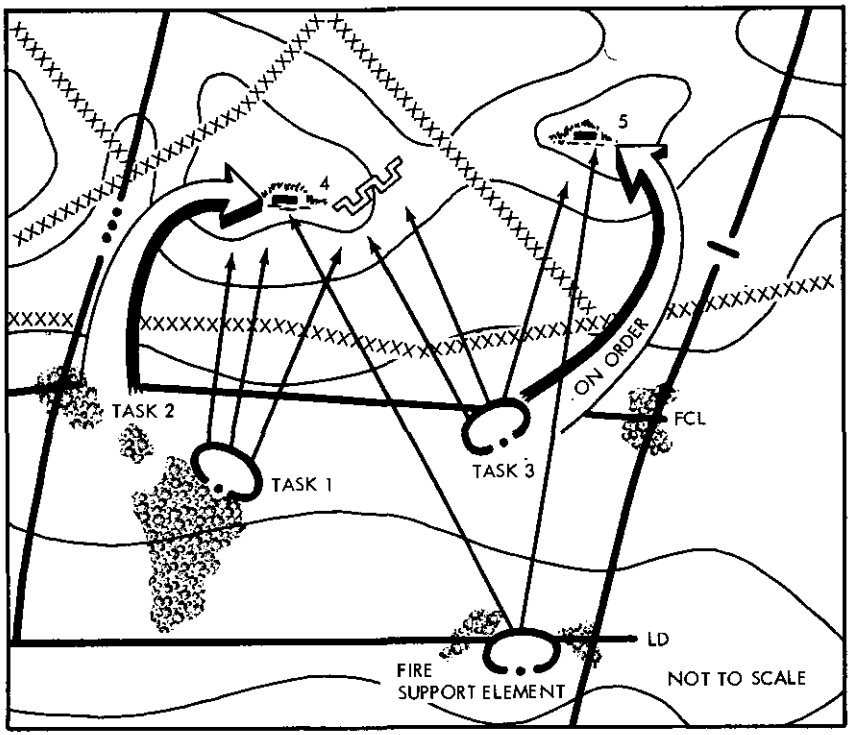


Figure 20. Tasks of the maneuver element (schematic).

force to lose the means of neutralizing the bunker under attack. This can be accomplished by employing two of each item of special equipment and assigning those items to separate individuals.

(3) *Task number three.*

(*a*) During the movement to the FCL and during the execution of task number two, task number three squad provides rifle protection for the task two squad.

(*b*) On order, task three squad assaults open emplacements in the vicinity of the bunker.

(*c*) Task three squad may also have an initial mission of augmenting the fires of the platoon fire support element.

(4) *Accomplishment of tasks.* There is no set order for accomplishment of these three tasks.

Some variations are—

(*a*) Execute task one, followed by task three, then task two. The attack may be conducted by neutralizing enemy fire, assaulting the enemy in open positions in the vicinity of the bunker, and seizing the bunker from the flank or rear. This method may be used against a bunker whose fires can be neutralized to the extent that the surrounding trenches and foxholes can be successfully assaulted.

(*b*) Execute task one, followed by task two, then task three. In this method the attack is conducted by neutralizing the enemy fire, assaulting the bunker, and then assaulting the enemy open positions in the vicinity of the bunker. This method is often forced upon the attacker because the bunker covers the only logical avenue of approach.

c. Consolidation.

(1) When the assigned objective has been taken, the rifle platoon consolidates in a perimeter around the objective. The perimeter is organized so that the major portion of the platoon's firepower covers the most likely direction(s) of enemy counterattack.

(2) As part of the consolidation, the platoon leader designates elements to protect knocked-out bunkers until they are completely destroyed; this prevents their reuse by the enemy. This mission is most frequently assigned to task number two squad because it already has assaulted, and controls the bunkers.

d. Continuation of the Attack.

(1) In addition to his initial planning for the continuation of the attack, the platoon leader, upon seizure of each intermediate bunker, considers:

(*a*) Length of time the bunker must be guarded to prevent its reuse by the enemy and the number of men required.

(*b*) Replacements of expended and destroyed items of special equipment.

(*c*) Ability of the platoon to sustain further casualties and remain effective.

(2) After reorganization, the platoon may continue the attack to seize other bunkers. The platoon leader issues a fragmentary order, and the attack is continued in the same manner.

Section VIII. RIVER CROSSING OPERATIONS

77. General

a. A river crossing operation is used to rapidly move an attacking force across a river obstacle so that it may continue the attack to seize the assigned objective(s). This operation differs generally from normal ground attacks as follows:

(1) Specialized equipment and personnel are often required.

(2) The momentum of the attack is canalized into areas having suitable crossing sites.

(3) Control of units is difficult because of the obstacle itself, and the employment of units of several arms and services.

(4) Once the unit is committed, it is difficult to deviate from the initial plan.

b. There are two general types of river crossing.

(1) *Hasty crossing.* A crossing conducted as a continuation of the attack with a minimum loss of momentum by the same forces which advance to the riverline. The crossing means must be physically present or immediately available. The crossing is characterized by speed, surprise, and a minimum concentration of personnel and equipment. It is frequently used when enemy defenses are weak or when bridges and fords are captured before the enemy has a chance to destroy them.

(2) *Deliberate crossing.* A crossing characterized by some delay, the employment of specialized crossing means and more detailed preparation and planning. It may be conducted to resume the offense, as a result of an unsuccessful hasty crossing or when a hasty crossing is undesirable because of the difficulty of the obstacle or the strength of enemy defenses.

c. The type of crossing conducted will be influenced by the crossing means available.

(1) When APC's are available the rifle platoon is provided an amphibious capability for conducting either a hasty or deliberate crossing. Separate mechanized platoons may make a hasty crossing as they arrive at the riverline when speed is essential to capitalize on a discovered enemy weakness (FM 7–11).

(2) Assault boats are used more extensively when conducting deliberate crossings. However, speed is reduced and the assault forces are more vulnerable to enemy fires. Boats are highly effective during periods of reduced visibility for silent crossings of assault forces or for patrol actions. For techniques of employment, see FM 7–11.

(3) Rafts, although not used for initial assault forces, are an excellent means of ferrying essential supporting equipment when bridges are not found intact. Rafts provide greater flexibility than do fixed bridge sites.

(4) Bridges can be constructed by engineers to support deliberate crossings to rapidly build-up forces on the far bank.

(5) The use of army aircraft, particularly helicopters, is advantageous in lifting initial assault forces to deep objectives for the purpose of isolating crossing areas. Helicopters may also be used to airlift the weapons platoon, other heavy equipment, resupply assault forces, and evacuate wounded.

d. The following are desirable characteristics of a crossing site regardless of the crossing means:

(1) A far shore that is undefended or lightly held.

(2) Terrain on the far bank which facilitates the rapid seizure of key terrain.

(3) A moderate river current.

(4) No water obstacles present.

(5) Suitable banks for entry and exit.

(6) Dominating terrain on the near bank.

(7) Covered approaches to the river bank.

(8) Suitable sites for ferries and bridges to carry tanks and other heavy equipment across.

78. Planning and Preparation

a. A hasty crossing may be conducted without prior reconnaissance of the riverline by assaulting platoons. The feasibility of a hasty crossing should be determined in advance. Higher headquarters obtains detailed information on the river and its defenses and passes it on to attacking units before they arrive at the riverline. Based on this information, plans are made to conduct the crossing by the fastest and easiest means possible. Authority for crossing may be delegated down to platoon level to capitalize on discovered enemy weaknesses, maintain momentum, and achieve surprise.

b. Deliberate crossings require detailed planning and preparation at all levels of command.

(1) Platoon leaders should take as many of their subordinate leaders as possible on a reconnaissance. This includes vehicle drivers, if the unit is mechanized. The reconnaissance should include routes forward, selected sites for entry and exit, conditions of the river and its banks, the presence of underwater obstacles, and objectives on the far bank. Specific sites should be selected where each vehicle or boat enters the water and, if possible, where each will land on the far bank.

(2) Platoon leaders must determine the formation, priority of crossing, and the loading plans for their platoons. If APC's are used, the best formation is an echelon with the lead APC on the downstream side. This precludes one APC drifting into another during the crossing.

(3) During the leader's reconnaissance the troops prepare their equipment for crossing, draw special equipment, and accomplish those tasks performed in any forward assembly area.

(4) Rehearsals are as thorough as time and the availability of facilities will permit. Control is decentralized during the crossing, and crossing teams are expected to fight as teams until platoon leaders can regain control. For this reason soldiers must be thoroughly briefed and rehearsed. For further information on planning and preparation, see FM 7–11.

79. Conduct of River Crossings

a. When a hasty crossing cannot be conducted, enemy forces are eliminated on the near bank, neutralized on the far bank and a deliberate crossing is executed. The crossing is conducted in conjunction with preparatory fires, the extensive use of smoke, and feints in other areas. The platoon will participate in the crossing as part of a larger unit. Crossings are normally made on wide fronts to facilitate dispersion, rapid crossing, and deception.

b. When crossing by APC's, the platoon moves on multiple routes rapidly from the assembly area to the river bank which is usually designated as the LD. An attack position is seldom used. The APC machineguns are fired during the crossing as necessary. If APC's cannot climb the far bank, men dismount through the top hatches and fight on foot until the APC's can link up. The company commander may keep a platoon in reserve on the near bank for later commitment to gain greater tactical advantage.

c. When crossing by assault boat, troops move to the attack position where they are met by guides who take them to the boats. The attack position is the only halt planned prior to reorganization on the initial objective. Each boat team carries its boat to the water. Normally, there will be an engineer boat crew assigned to each boat for technical control and to assist in loading troops and equipment properly. Boat teams load under the supervision of these engineer personnel. Crew-served weapons, ammunition, and other bulky items are placed in the boat first with the weight distributed evenly. Troops then load from both sides with the weapons of the men assigned as paddlers carried by the men in the center of the boat. The crossing is made at maximum speed under the tactical control of the boat team commander who directs the sternman (engineer) to the desired landing spot. Troops do not fire their weapons while in the boats. Upon landing, troops fight as boat teams until control can be regained by the platoon leader. Normally, all rifle platoons cross abreast in the first wave. Critical supplies and equipment carried in the boats but not needed immediately by the first waves are stockpiled on the far bank. Casualties are evacuated in returning boats. Normal resupply is established when means become available to cross preloaded vehicles.

d. For further information refer to the following:

(1) Use of APC's—FM's 17–1 and 7–11.

(2) Use of helicopters—FM 57–35.

(3) River crossing operations—FM 31–60.

Section IX. RAIDS

80. General

a. A raid is a surprise attack on an enemy force or installation with the raiding force withdrawing after accomplishing its mission. All or part of the platoon may conduct a raid independently, or the platoon may conduct a raid as part of the company. Regardless of the size of the raiding force, the same techniques of organization and tactical employment apply. See FM 7–11 for a discussion of company level raids and FM 21–75 for a discussion of raid patrols.

b. The success of a raid depends largely on the element of surprise. For this reason, raids are frequently conducted at night or during adverse weather, or on terrain which the enemy may consider impassable.

c. Paragraphs 81 and 82 deal generally with the planning and conduct of raids at platoon level. Specific duties of soldiers and elements of the raiding force are covered in the references given in *a* above.

81. Planning and Preparation

Detailed planning is necessary for the successful execution of a raid. The raid commander must be provided with all available information of the enemy forces located along his route and in and near the objective area. The following (see FM 7–11 for a more detailed discussion of these items) should be included in the raid plan:

a. Organization. The raiding force consists basically of an assault element and a security element. Each of these elements may be further subdivided and specially equipped to accomplish specific missions at the objective or during movement. Demolition teams, search teams and prisoner teams are examples of this.

b. Route of Advance and Withdrawal. Routes are selected to avoid known or suspected enemy positions. Alternate routes of withdrawal are selected and used if necessary.

c. Rallying Points. Rallying points which provide concealment and cover, and are easily recognizable by the unit, are designated along the route to and from the objective.

d. Fire Support Plan. A complete and detailed fire support plan is prepared for use if necessary. Supporting fires are planned to isolate the objective, to break up enemy counterattacks, and to aid in keeping the withdrawal route open.

e. Security. Every effort is made to prevent the enemy from gaining knowledge of the raid or its mission. During the raid,

security detachments protect the flanks and silently eliminate enemy security elements blocking the route.

f. Rehearsals. When possible, the raid is rehearsed under conditions similar to those which will be met. All members of the raiding force must understand their tasks and be able to perform them quickly and efficiently.

g. Airborne Raids. In addition to the considerations listed in *a* through *f* above, the following aspects should be considered when planning an airborne raid (either parachute delivered or air landed).

(1) Routes for aircraft are selected to avoid enemy positions and to take advantage of defilade. Deceptive measures and low level flying techniques may be used.

(2) An airborne raiding force can strike deep into enemy territory, but in so doing will be out of range of normal supporting weapons. In such a situation the force may work in conjunction with partisan or guerrilla groups and may receive fire support from aircraft or naval gunfire. Such operations are coordinated at higher level.

(3) Planning and preparation for an airborne raid is similar to that for an airmobile assault, as is the conduct of the withdrawal by air. See chapter 5 for a discussion of airmobile techniques. The plan of attack for an airmobile raid is modified to incorporate the considerations discussed above.

82. Conduct of Raids

a. During movement to the objective area, the raiding force attempts to bypass enemy elements and escape detection. If a security detachment becomes engaged, the main force attempts to avoid the action.

b. When an airborne or ground raiding force arrives at the objective area, security elements take positions where they can seal off entry to and escape from the area. When the security elements are in position the assault element attacks quickly and violently to capitalize on surprise and accomplish its mission in the minimum amount of time.

c. When the mission is accomplished, the force reassembles at a designated rallying point, breaks contact with the enemy and moves rapidly along the route of withdrawal to friendly positions or a designated pick up point for withdrawal by air. Security detachments cover the flanks and rear during movement.

Section X. INFILTRATION

83. General

a. Tactical infiltration is a form of penetration involving the moving of forces into the enemy rear by small groups. The infiltrating groups move by stealth, avoid enemy contact, and assemble at a concealed rendezvous point.

b. Infiltrating groups normally move by foot and are therefore limited to light equipment.

c. Until the attack on the objective, infiltrating groups remain concealed and hidden from the enemy. Discovery by the enemy may cause their destruction by enemy artillery and reserve units.

d. Because of the dispersion that can be expected on the nuclear battlefield, infiltration as a technique will be emphasized. A further consideration is that the vulnerability of the attacking unit is reduced by the enemy's inability to employ large nuclear weapons against such attacks where both friendly and enemy units will be interspersed in their deployment.

84. Planning and Preparation
(fig. 21)

a. Normally units will be broken down into platoons, squads, or fire teams for the infiltration. The size of the infiltrating group depends primarily on the need for control between infiltrating groups, and the number and size of gaps in enemy defenses.

b. In the order, each infiltrating group is issued the following information as a minimum: a release point, a time of release, an infiltration lane, a rendezvous point, alternate rendezvous points, and the time of rendezvous. Group rally points and danger areas may also be specified. Each group leader is given the details on actions at the objective to insure that the mission can be accomplished in the event some infiltration groups are unable to rendezvous.

c. Upon receipt of the order the group leaders follow the troop leading procedures as discussed in paragraph 9. The planning, preparation, and conduct of each infiltration group is the same as for a separate patrol (FM 21–75).

d. While the group leaders accomplish their steps in troop leading, the assistant group leaders prepare their groups for infiltration. Necessary equipment is issued, checked, and secured for silent movement. Soldiers prepare themselves and their equipment. Where possible, each infiltration group should carry the necessary special equipment to accomplish the mission of the major unit, thereby insuring the accomplishment of the mission in the event all groups do not participate in the attack.

e. After the group leaders issue their order, rehearsals covering the passage of lines, actions at danger areas, enemy contact, signals, as well as actions at the rendezvous point and objective will be conducted. Each soldier should be required to memorize the route, azimuths to and the location of rendezvous points.

f. Since the accomplishment of the mission rests primarily on the ability of the subordinate leaders, the planning and preparation must be as thorough and as detailed as time and facilities will permit.

g. Direct and indirect fires are planned to create diversions and to protect and support the unit during the infiltration, at the rendezvous point, and during the attack and consolidation or withdrawal.

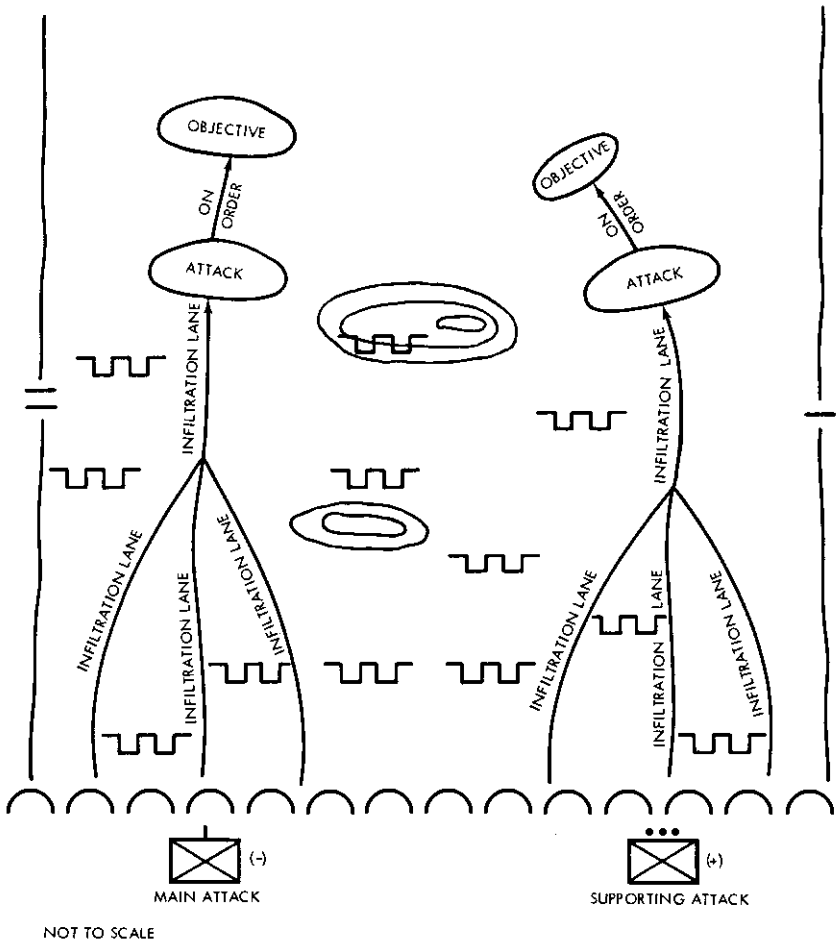


Figure 21. Rifle company conducting infiltration (schematic).

h. Control Measures.

(1) *Objectives* may be enemy reserves, artillery units, or command and logistical installations. Infiltrating forces may also seize key terrain or establish roadblocks to restrict enemy movement, isolate the battle area, and facilitate the movement of friendly mechanized forces.

(2) *Routes* to the objective from the rendezvous point should be concealed for surprise and for protection.

(3) *Rendezvous points* should be concealed from possible enemy detection by observation and patrols. They are secured by the first group into the area. Escape routes should be designated to alternate rendezvous points.

(4) *Infiltration lanes* extend through known or likely gaps in the enemy defenses and are often located in rough, swampy, or heavily forested areas.

(5) The *time of infiltration* is selected to take advantage of conditions of reduced visibility, such as darkness, rain, snow, fog, etc. The time of attack is often designated to best support the plans of higher headquarters.

85. Conduct of the Attack by Infiltration

a. The infiltrating groups move by stealth to avoid detection. Artillery fire is used as necessary to distract enemy attention. If detected, groups avoid engagement by withdrawing or moving around the enemy. Enemy forces in the infiltration lane are reported to the controlling headquarters. Groups which are unable to reach their rendezvous point in time report their situation for further instructions. Such groups may be assigned contingency missions, such as target acquisition, harassment of enemy positions and columns, or be exfiltrated by foot or air.

b. At the rendezvous point, groups assemble and attack preparations are completed (some groups may be missing). The assembled force leaves the rendezvous point to attack the objective at the designated time. The main body may be preceded by a small security patrol. Its mission is to prevent the main body from being detected or surprised. This will often require a detour in the planned route.

c. Short of the objective, the force is halted for final reconnaissance and coordination (attack position). This location should be the last safe, covered, and concealed area before reaching the objective.

d. The attack on the objective is characterized by surprise and maximum firepower at the objective's weakest point to quickly destroy or capture it. The attack may be made by using the raid

(pars. 80–82), daylight attack (pars. 30–38), or night attack (pars. 39–48) technique. Platoons acting alone normally use the raid technique, whereas company and large size units usually use the day or night attack technique.

e. If the objective is retained, it is consolidated against enemy counterattacks. If link-up is planned, previously designated visual and sound recognition signals prevent fire fights between friendly units.

f. If the objective is not retained, the attacking force withdraws either to a clandestine assembly area for further attacks or withdraws to friendly lines. The withdrawal to friendly lines may be by air or by exfiltration, either as an intact unit or by small groups. Upon reaching friendly lines, the unit is again reassembled.

Section XI. ANTIGUERRILLA OPERATIONS

86. General

Guerrilla warfare is conducted by the enemy in friendly rear areas. Guerrilla forces are normally made up of persons familiar with the local area, and are organized into a military organization. Members of small guerrilla forces may at times be apparently peaceful citizens, while members of a large guerrilla force usually do not maintain their civilian pursuits. Guerrilla forces are generally supported by individuals or small groups who may not be formal members of the guerrilla force or the underground, but provide supplies, intelligence, and guides. Guerrilla operations are offensive actions characterized by surprise, rapid movement, deception, secrecy, and stealth. These operations may be conducted by guerrilla forces acting either separately from, or in conjunction with, regular forces. Regular forces may at times adopt guerrilla tactics, but in doing so lose those advantages inherent to regular forces.

a. Characteristics of Guerrilla Warfare. Guerrilla forces operate in enemy rear areas to demoralize the enemy and to upset and paralyze his operations. They use relatively inaccessible areas for bases of operation. Moving rapidly to the objective area, normally under the cover of darkness, they accomplish their mission, disperse, and return to their base of operation. Missions for guerrilla forces may include ambush operations, raids, and attacks in force. As a general rule, they avoid prolonged defensive combat due to lack of supporting weapons and relatively small numbers. Guerrilla forces may be expected to react violently whenever surrounded or ambushed. The result usually is offensive action followed by rapid dispersal.

b. The Guerrilla Fighter. The individual guerrilla is a highly motivated and crafty fighter. He knows the terrain in which he is operating and is quick to capitalize on weaknesses of his opponent. He is thoroughly imbued with a spirit of resistance and believes strongly in his cause. He may be expected to attack vigorously without thought for personal safety. He is a master at hit and run tactics and can live and move with ease in difficult terrain.

c. Security Against Guerrilla Operations. The rifle platoon must be particularly alert for guerrilla attack when in seemingly safe or friendly rear areas. The guerrilla can be expected to capitalize on any relaxation of security in assembly areas or while in march columns. Local security and sentinels coupled with a defensive plan in assembly areas are minimum security. A platoon moving in either a foot or vehicular column must establish visual security to the front and flanks particularly at halts. It must have SOP plans to destroy or evade ambushing forces. For a discussion of security during movement see chapter 6.

87. Offensive Action Against Guerrillas

a. General. Aggressive offensive action is required to eliminate and destroy guerrilla forces. Offensive antiguerrilla action is conducted within the principles and methods of regular offensive combat, only techniques are modified to meet the peculiarities of guerrilla warfare.

b. Purpose. The purpose of offensive action is the destruction of guerrilla forces and their requisites for operation.

(1) *Requisite for guerrilla operation.*

(*a*) A *base* which provides security, discourages pursuit, offers adequate routes of entry and exit, provides routes to alternate bases, and is close to the area of operations.

(*b*) *A means of supply* for food, weapons, ammunition, and equipment.

(*c*) *Intelligence* which enables it to plan operations or evacuate its base when endangered. Common means of gaining this intelligence include interrogating friendly civilians, monitoring enemy communications, interrogation of opposing troops, surveillance, observation, and raids.

(*d*) *Communications* to gain timely information and to disseminate instructions promptly. Means normally employed include messengers, civilian radio equipment, and captured friendly equipment.

(2) *Objectives.* Objectives may include guerrilla concentrations, headquarters, communication centers, and sources of supply. Antiguerrilla units seek specific tactical objectives which facilitate concentration of forces, coordination of effort, surprise, use of maximum fire support, and finally, the destruction or capture of the maximum number of guerrillas.

c. Types of Offensive Operations. The most effective forms of offensive action against guerrillas may be broadly classified as encirclement, attack, and pursuit.

(1) *Encirclement.* Normally, the most effective method of completely destroying a guerrilla force is by encirclement. The rifle platoon participates in the encirclement as a part of a larger force. The encirclement operation consists of the movement from assembly areas to the line of encirclement, occupation of the line of encirclement, offensive drives, and the destruction of the guerrilla force within the encircled area.

(*a*) *Movement to the line of encirclement* (fig. 22). This movement is timed so all units occupying the line of encirclement arrive at their positions on the line simultaneously. The movement is characterized by speed and secrecy. Movement from assembly areas may begin in darkness to gain surprise, but the operation is timed to insure the arrival, organization, and occupation of the line of encirclement by daylight. Any means of transportation may be utilized consistent with the maintenance of secrecy. The rifle platoon will move as a part of the rifle company, using the normal approach march formation discussed in chapter 6. Platoons will be released from the company formation at a platoon release point. They then move along designated routes to squad release points and finally to designated positions along the line of encirclement.

(*b*) *Occupation of the line of encirclement* (fig. 23). The platoon will occupy its assigned sector in the line of encirclement in the same manner normal defensive positions are organized(including local security). The platoon must be prepared to defend its position as rapidly as possible in view of the known guerrilla tendency to react violently against any effort to encircle. If the encircling force is not of sufficient size to organize the line of encirclement as a normal defensive position, the rifle platoon may be required to defend its assigned

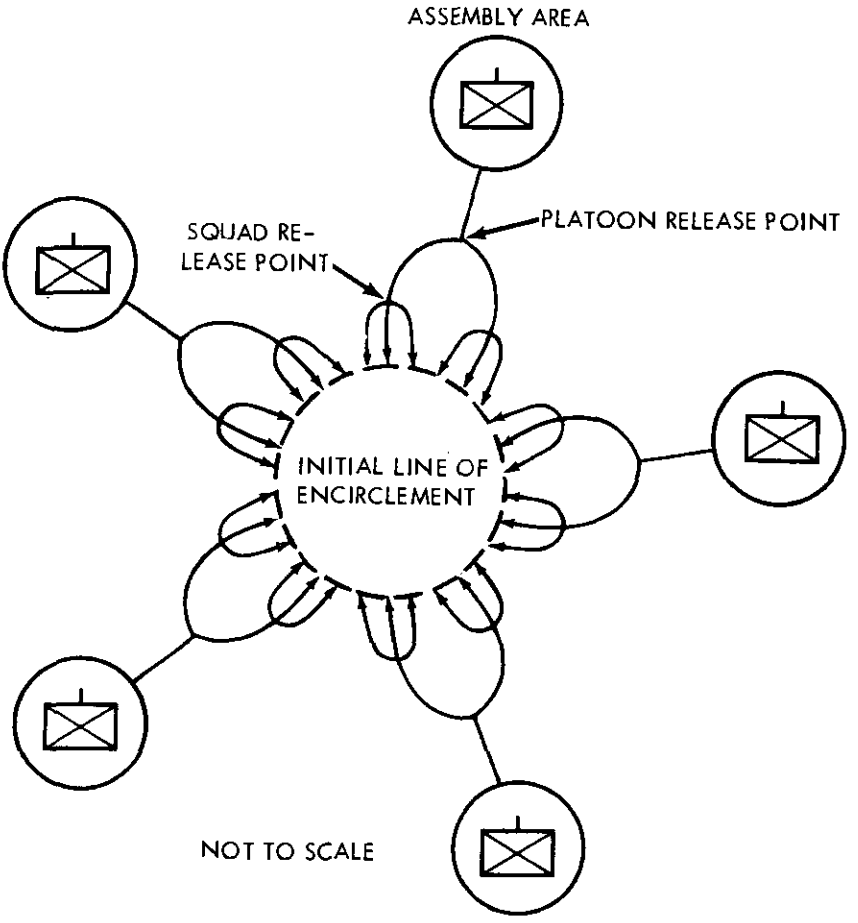


Figure 22. Movement to the initial line of encirclement (schematic).

area in a series of mutually supporting outguards; this would be done in the same manner as the organization of the combat outpost line in chapter 3. The guerrillas may be expected to probe for gaps and to attack weak points attempting to force a gap. Units organizing the line of encirclement push strong patrols out to their front consistent with the patrolling plan established by higher headquarters to reconnoiter and give timely warning of the approach of guerrilla formations. The company reserve platoon is located in depth to cover likely guerrilla escape routes. The reserve is committed if a guerrilla force succeeds in breaking through the line of encirclement. All available organic and supporting fires are used as appro-

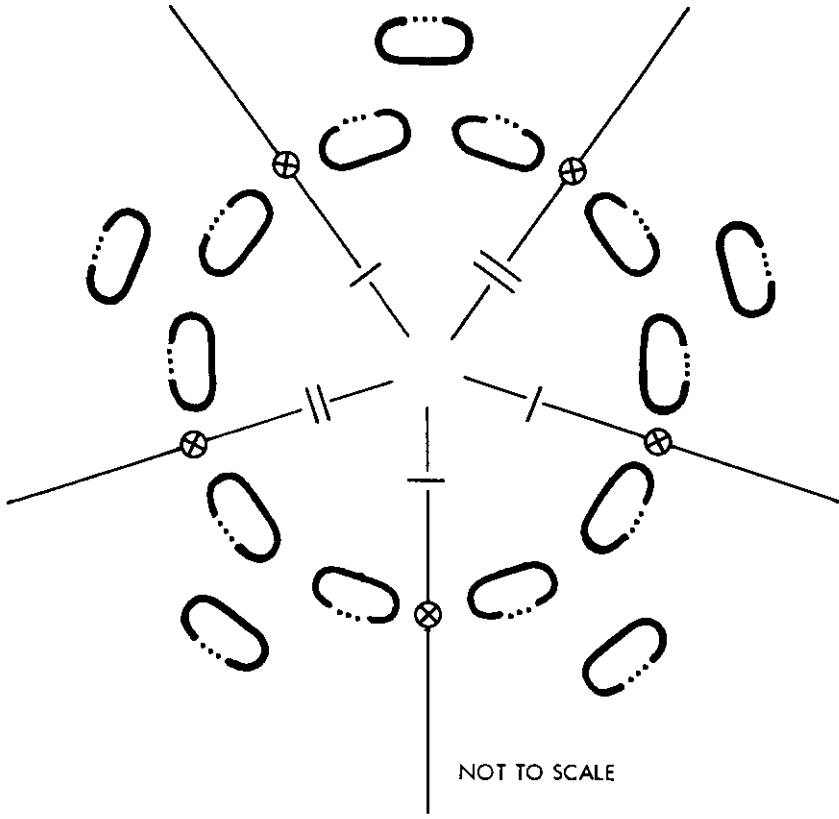


Figure 23. Occupation of the line of encirclement (schematic).

priate to hold the guerrilla force within the encircled area and to destroy it.

(*c*) *Offensive drive* (fig. 24). The encircled area may be reduced by all forces advancing simultaneously from the line of encirclement to successive designated lines in the center. This method can be used when the area of encirclement is small and the guerrilla forces are comparatively weak. When this method is employed, the rifle platoon moves forward within its zone on order, maintaining the platoon line formation. It thoroughly combs every possible hiding place for guerrilla personnel and equipment. If supporting positions are available, the weapons squad is positioned to cover the advance of the platoon line. If no supporting positions are available, the weapons squad will normally move at a specified distance to the rear of the platoon line,

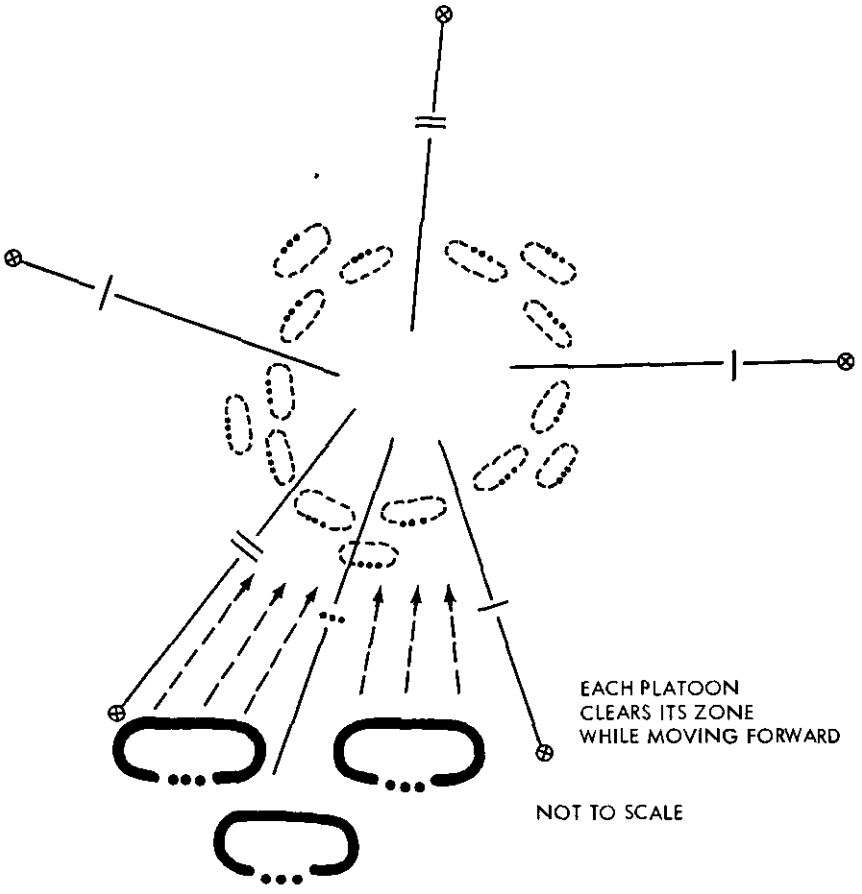


Figure 24. Offensive drive to destroy the encircled guerrillas, all elements of the encircling force advancing simultaneously (schematic).

where it is readily available for employment by the platoon leader. This tightening of the encirclement requires close coordination and constant exchange of information between squads, platoons, and companies to insure a solid line is maintained at all times. When large areas are involved or the hostile forces are strong, encircling forces may hold their position while other forces attack into the area and cut it into smaller parts which are then cleared of guerrillas. The rifle platoon may comprise all or a part of one of those forces. When the attacks have effectively cut off a portion of the encircled area, the original encircling force will move forward on line as described above to thoroughly comb the area between the original line of

encirclement and the line occupied by the attacking element. In this manner the encirclement is continuously tightened to the maximum extent possible. When a contact is made with guerrilla elements by the encircling force as it moves forward on line, the rifle platoon or platoons involved should attempt to eliminate this opposition by fire alone. If it is necessary to commit a maneuver element to eliminate the resistance, care must be exercised to preclude the guerrillas from escaping through the area vacated by the maneuver element. In many cases the reserve platoon will be committed in a limited objective attack against resistance of this type. Due to the necessity for speed of execution, squad or platoon battle drill should normally be used. Any time the encircling force halts during the tightening operations, platoons begin preparing their positions for defense. They must be prepared for a guerrilla attack in force during any phase of this operation.

(*d*) *Destruction of the encircled force* (fig. 25). When the line of encirclement has been tightened to the maximum extent possible, one method of destroying the guerrilla force is to attack through the final line of encirclement. The size of this assaulting force will vary depending upon intelligence estimates as to the strength, armament, and disposition of the guerrilla force. It may move by foot, by helicopter, or APC's. It employs normal offensive tactics to seize its assigned objective. Once the guerrilla force has been destroyed, the area within the final line of encirclement is thoroughly combed to insure no guerrilla personnel or equipment have escaped detection. Again, the rifle platoon participates in this combing operation by moving forward within its assigned zone in a platoon line formation, thoroughly searching all possible hiding places.

(*e*) *Destruction of the encircled force by "hammer and anvil" attack* (fig. 26). The encircled force may be destroyed by a portion of the line of encirclement holding position (anvil) while the remainder of the encircling force attacks (hammer) to drive the guerrilla force into the portion of the line of encirclement holding position. The guerrilla force is destroyed by a combination of offensive action and supporting fires.

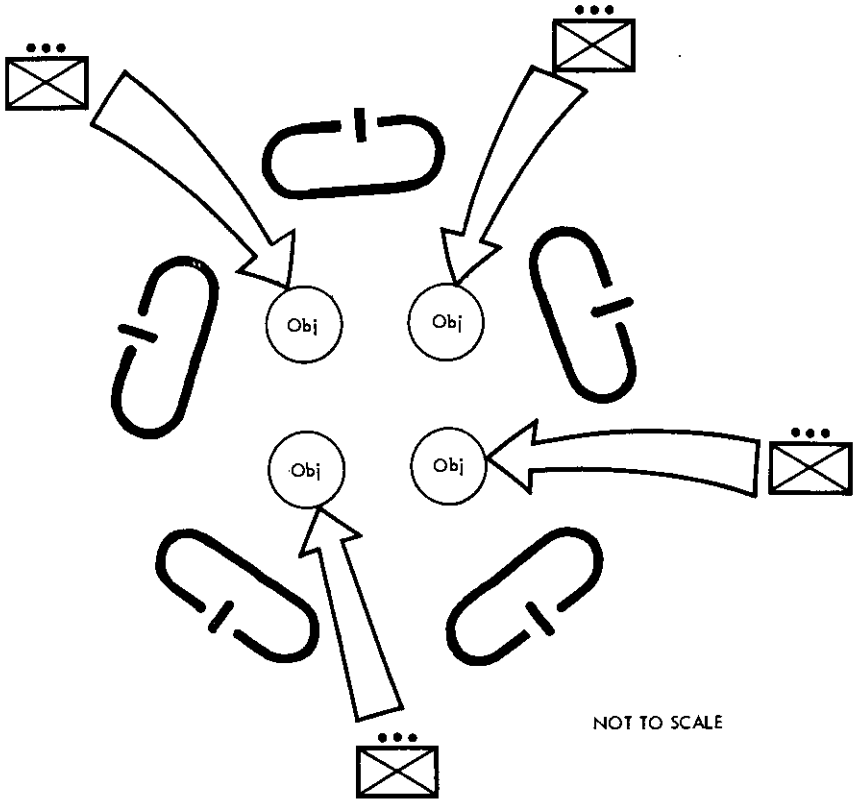


Figure 25. Destruction of the encircled force by attack through the line of encirclement (schematic).

(2) *Attacks.* Although the encirclement is the most effective offensive maneuver used in combatting guerrilla forces, it is often difficult to execute because of inadequate forces, the type of terrain involved, and the limitations imposed by the tactical situation. Regardless of these factors, pressure on the enemy must be maintained. Quite often the most expedient means of retaining pressure will be through patrols, raids, and attacks upon guerrilla forces.

(*a*) Patrols sent out to gain necessary information must move with the greatest stealth. All information must be transmitted as quickly as possible. All means of communication are used to insure the rapid transmission of information in keeping with the required security. Only through the use of accurate, timely information can the forward elements of the attacking

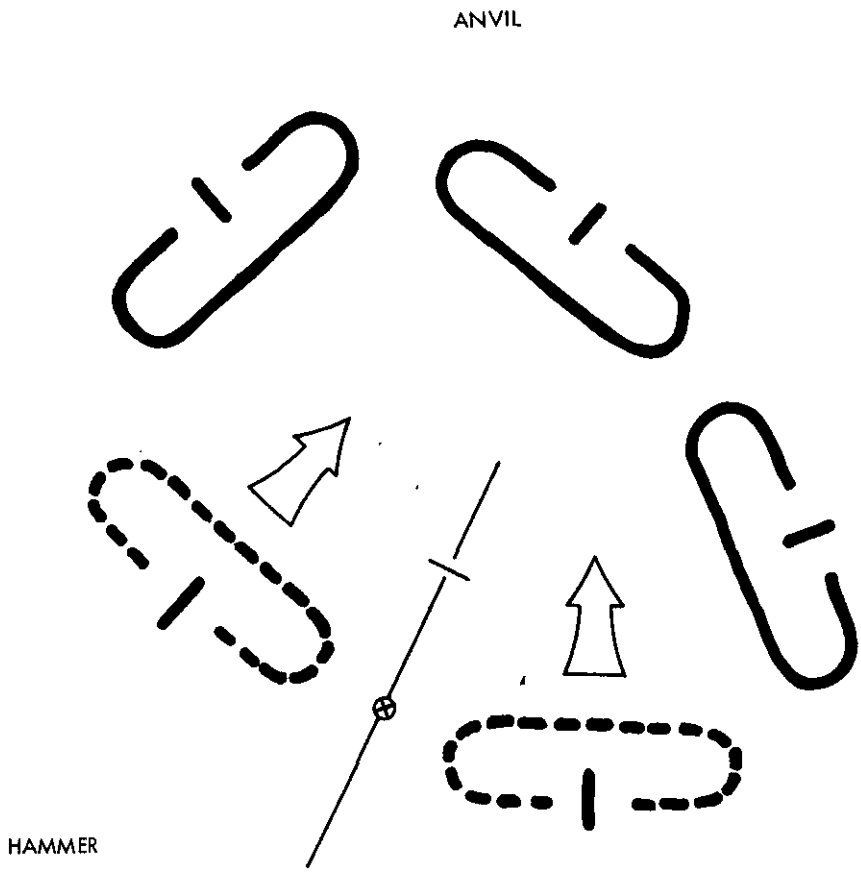


Figure 26. Destruction of the encircled force by hammer and anvil attack (schematic).

force move into position to maintain contact with and block the escape of guerrillas.

(*b*) Squads and platoons will normally employ the offensive tactics discussed previously in this manual. Attacks upon guerrilla forces however are characterized by the need for flexibility and rapid implementation of these tactics. Surprise will give the attacker a marked advantage, so every effort must be made to move all elements into the attack position quickly and undetected. Guerrilla forces usually cease move-

ment during daylight. Squads and platoons will normally use the hours of darkness to move into attack positions and maneuver to blocking positions which will seal off escape routes. All types of offensive tactics are employed. Success or failure of the attack to destroy guerrilla forces will often be determined by aggressiveness of all soldiers and the speed which the main body of the attacking force joins the attack once contact is made.

(*c*) Whenever possible, the double envelopment will be used by the main body. This maneuver limits guerrilla withdrawal, disorganizes them, and creates the greatest possible shock effect. All elements in the attacking forces should close rapidly with the enemy because he usually lacks supporting fires. Furthermore, squads and platoons must be impressed with the idea that the objective is total destruction of guerrillas, not merely seizure and retention of ground.

88. Patrolling in Antiguerrilla Operations

All forms of patrol actions prove valuable during antiguerrilla actions. Combat, reconnaissance, security, contact, and ambush patrols are used. The patrol is an ideal force to use in antiguerrilla operations because it can be tailored for a specific mission and quickly dispatched. Speed and decisiveness are absolute requirements in such operations. Guerrilla forces use dispersion to avoid capture and annihilation. Even when surprise is achieved during the encirclement or the attack, some of the enemy can be expected to get away. The pursuit and mopping up of such forces will usually require many squad and platoon-sized operations. Patrols will often be dispatched with the mission of raiding or conducting an ambush. These combat patrols are organized as indicated in FM 21–75. They can be held in reserve to be committed at any time during an antiguerrilla operation. Such patrols must be well rehearsed in actions to be taken. They must be led by men with initiative, be in excellent physical condition, and be capable of enduring prolonged hardship.

Section XII. RIFLE PLATOON AS RESERVE OF THE COMPANY IN OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS

89. General

Normally one rifle platoon is withheld as the company reserve during the initial action of the attack. The company commander

commits the reserve platoon so as to best influence the action and to maintain the momentum of the attack. This is best accomplished by attacking in a new direction to hit the flanks or rear of the enemy to further exploit the success of the attacking platoons. Because of the various missions which it may be assigned, the platoon leader must keep abreast of the tactical situation at all times, know the missions and tactical plans of the assaulting platoons, and be familiar with the terrain and enemy situation in the entire company zone of action. He must be capable of rapid and effective response when committed.

90. Missions of the Reserve Platoon

In addition to having the capability of attacking from a new direction, the reserve rifle platoon may be assigned one or more of the following missions:

a. Protect a flank or the rear of the company.

b. Maintain contact with adjacent units.

c. Mop up a position which has been overrun or bypassed by the attacking platoons.

d. Provide a base of fire to support the attacking platoons.

e. Assume the mission of an attacking platoon.

f. Provide the final blow necessary to seize the company objective.

g. Protect or assist the consolidation and reorganization on the objective.

91. Mechanized Reserve Platoon

Due to its greater mobility and reduced reaction time, the reserve platoon of a mechanized rifle company is often capable of accomplishing more than one of the reserve missions previously listed. As an example, it may be able to protect a flank, maintain contact with an adjacent unit and still be able to quickly influence the action of the attacking platoons. The mobility of the APC's of the reserve permits greater dispersion in the company area. Mechanized or airmobile flank patrols may be used to screen the flanks of a rapid advance. The adverse effects of depleting the reserve platoon must always be considered when more than one mission is assigned the reserve platoon.

92. Reserve Platoon in Night Attack

A reserve platoon is less effective as a maneuver element during periods of reduced visibility due to the difficulties of control and coordination. For this reason the rifle company will normally attack with three platoons abreast and not retain a rifle platoon in reserve. A reserve platoon may be employed when the company

zone is too narrow to attack with three platoons forward or when there is a dangerously exposed flank, or the enemy situation is such that it appears a reserve may be required. When assigned the mission of protecting a flank or the rear, the reserve platoon may either follow the attack echelon closely or be brought forward by guides, or on signal.

CHAPTER 3

DEFENSE

Section I. GENERAL

93. General

This chapter provides guidance for the rifle squad and platoon leaders in conducting defensive operations. It is applicable to the rifle platoon of the infantry, airborne infantry, and mechanized infantry.

a. The rifle platoon normally defends as a part of the company, requiring the platoon leader to have an understanding of company defensive tactics as discussed in FM's 7–11 and 17–15.

b. The mechanized infantry platoon when dismounted will function the same as any other infantry platoon. Paragraphs 123 and 124 outline the major differences in the employment of the mechanized infantry platoon.

94. Mission and Employment

The mission of the platoon in defense is to repel the enemy assault by fire and close combat.

a. The rifle platoon defends as part of a larger force to deny a vital area to the enemy, protect flanks, gain time, economize forces, or disorganize and destroy the enemy.

b. The forward rifle platoon of a forward rifle company defends its assigned area by stopping the enemy by fire forward of the battle area and repelling him by close combat if he reaches it.

c. The reserve platoon of a forward rifle company adds depth to the defense and provides a means to destroy or eject the enemy if he penetrates the defensive area.

d. The rifle platoon of a *reserve company* organizes and prepares positions similar to a forward rifle platoon. These additional missions may be assigned—

(1) Act as the maneuver element in the counterattack.

(2) Assist in preparing forward company defensive areas.

(3) Cover the withdrawal of forward units.

(4) Assist in blocking or canalizing an enemy penetration.

(5) Assist in protecting the battalion flanks or rear.

(6) Act as forward security as a part of the COPL.

95. Types and Echelons of Defense

a. There are two basic types of defense, the area defense and the mobile defense. The employment of the rifle platoon is essentially the same in either type of defense.

(1) The *area defense* is adopted to hold specific terrain. It consists of strong forces deployed on position assisted by supporting fires to stop and repulse the attacker. Reserves are employed to block and destroy the enemy, eliminate penetrations, and reinforce threatened areas.

(2) The *mobile defense* is a form of defense which may be employed by echelons above battalion. The rifle platoon and company do not have the capability of conducting the mobile defense; however, they participate as a part of a battalion in a mobile defense conducted by a larger force. The mobile defense is one in which the minimum combat power of the division is committed in the forward defense area to warn of impending attack, to canalize the enemy into less favorable terrain and otherwise impede, harass, and disorganize him. The bulk of the division's combat power is retained in reserve, positioned for offensive action. The success of the mobile defense depends upon aggressive reconnaissance, the timely receipt of accurate information on enemy strengths, movements and dispositions and the ability of all forces to move rapidly. Employment of the rifle platoon or company in the mobile defense normally dictates that it be either mechanized or motorized.

b. The defense consists of three echelons—the security echelon, forces in the forward defensive area, and reserves.

(1) The security echelon provides early warning of the approach of the enemy, delays and disorganizes his advance, and deceives him as to the true location of the battle area.

(2) The forward forces engage the enemy in decisive combat to stop, slow, canalize, or disorganize him for destruction by other forces and means.

(3) The reserves provide depth and flexibility to limit penetrations and destroy or eject the enemy by counterattack.

96. Fundamentals of Defense

The fundamentals of defense used for planning and conducting the defense are discussed below. These fundamentals do not have equal influence in any given situation nor do any of them apply to the same extent in different situations. The leader decides the degree to which each will affect his planning.

a. Proper use of Terrain. Defensive terrain analysis includes—

(1) *Observation and fields of fire.* The platoon leader examines the terrain to determine where he can obtain the best observation. Observation is essential for providing information of the enemy and adjusting indirect fire. The effectiveness of direct fire depends on observation and fields of fire. To improve fields of fire the platoon leader plans for the cutting or burning of weeds, grass, and crops; clearing brush, limbs of trees, or entire trees; demolition of buildings; and cutting lanes through woods. The clearing of fields of fire should not disclose the location of the battle area or weapons within the battle area. Terrain which affords good observation and fields of fire requires fewer men and weapons to organize and defend.

(2) *Concealment and cover.* The platoon leader plans for maximum use of available cover and concealment to deny the enemy air and ground observation of the defensive position. The platoon leader provides specific instructions concerning the digging and camouflaging of positions. Concealed and covered routes within the platoon position facilitate resupply, evacuation, and movement within the defensive position.

(3) *Obstacles.* Artificial obstacles are located where they can stop or canalize the enemy and whenever possible tied in with natural obstacles.

(4) *Key terrain.* The platoon leader considers those terrain features which dominate his area of responsibility. Key terrain is usually the high ground; however, high ground affording little or no observation or which does not dominate the surrounding terrain may be of little or no tactical value. The platoon leader plans to organize or otherwise deny the enemy terrain features which are important to the defense of the area.

(5) *Avenues of approach.* The platoon leader analyzes the avenues of approach available to the enemy in the terms of both foot and vehicular approaches. This analysis forms the basis of the employment of the squads and crew-served weapons. Avenues of approach available to the enemy are considered in terms of roads, terrain

corridors, cross compartments, and areas where the ground favors enemy movement into the defender's position from any direction. Serious consideration should be given to unlikely avenues of approach which might be used by the enemy to gain surprise.

b. Security. Security consists of measures taken to prevent surprise. All-Round security and protection against surprise are gained by patrols, surveillance, security posts, obstacles, trip flares, and warning devices.

c. Mutual Support. Units reinforce one another either by fire or movement.

d. All-Round Defense. A platoon must be prepared to defeat an attack from any direction.

e. Defense in Depth. Defense in depth is required because any forward defense may be breached if the enemy is willing to sacrifice the men, material, and time. Defense in depth prevents the enemy from having free maneuver in friendly rear areas.

f. Proper Use of Barriers. Barriers stop, slow, or canalize the enemy, making him more vulnerable to fires. Since the barrier plan originates at higher headquarters, the construction of additional obstacles must be coordinated with higher headquarters.

g. Fire Plan. The platoon fire plan is integrated into the overall fire plan. The fire plan provides for taking the enemy under fire as soon as he comes within observation (long range fires); to hold him under an increasingly heavy volume of fire as he approaches the battle area and to break up his attack formation (close defensive fires); to stop his assault by an intense barrier of fire immediately in front of the battle area (final protective fires); to destroy him by fire if he enters the battle area; and to support counterattacks (fires within the battle area). The fire plan includes fires of organic, attached, and supporting weapons on targets of opportunity and prearranged fires that can be delivered under any condition of visibility. The fire support plan is coordinated with the barrier plan to provide fire coverage of obstacles. Coordinated fire planning includes:

(1) *Barrages.* A barrage is a prearranged barrier of fire designed to protect friendly troops by impeding enemy movement across defensive areas. The location of barrages is coordinated with other indirect and direct fires, obstacles, and are part of the final protective fires. Barrages are normally planned to cover dangerous avenues of approach to break up an enemy assault on friendly positions along the FEBA. They are usually planned so that the near edge of the barrage is as close as possible

to the FEBA and no more than 200 meters forward of the FEBA. Barrages take priority over all other indirect fire missions. Artillery and mortar barrages are fired on order of the company commander in whose area they are located and, when delivered, are fired continuously at maximum rate for a specified time or until order is discontinued. Authority to call for them is frequently delegated to the platoon leader in whose area they are located. The firing of a barrage is repeated as necessary. The widths of barrages of firing units are shown below.

Weapon	*Unit*	*Width of barrage*
81-mm mortar	Squad	50 meters
81-mm mortar	Section	100 meters
4.2-inch mortar	Squad	50 meters
4.2-inch mortar	Section	180 meters
105-mm howitzer	Battery	200 meters
155-mm howitzer	Battery	300 meters

(2) *Concentrations.* A concentration is an area designated and numbered for future reference as a possible target. Concentrations planned may include fires to support the combat outposts, cover avenues of approach, cover areas which direct fire weapons cannot reach, cover gaps between units, limit penetrations, support counterattacks, and cover any other likely target areas.

(3) *Antitank defense.* The company commander employs the antitank squads and attached antitank weapons to cover likely armor approaches into the company area. These weapons normally engage armor at maximum effective range. Antitank weapons are positioned laterally and in depth. The rifle platoon antitank weapons are positioned by the platoon leader to add to the coverage of armor approaches into the platoon area. The employment of the platoon antitank weapons is closely coordinated with other antitank weapons.

(4) *Small arms fire.* The company commander insures small arms fire coverage of the company area of responsibility by assigning the platoons overlapping sectors of responsibility. He may further require the platoon leader to place fire in specific areas. The platoon leader defends his area of responsibility by assigning overlapping sectors of fire to his squads and directing the employment of his machineguns. Machineguns are assigned sectors of fire with either a final protective line or a principal direction of fire. To provide small arms fire coverage of the area during all conditions of visibility, the in-

fantry leader insures that range cards are prepared, aiming stakes that can be seen at night are placed at each position in order that Soldiers have a mental picture of the battle area so they may place fire in critical areas, and that weapons equipped with night viewing devices are employed on the avenues of approach and can mark targets for weapons not equipped with such devices.

h. Flexibility. The rifle platoon achieves flexibility by controlling and shifting fires and by the preparation of alternate and supplementary positions. Company and larger units employ reserves to gain additional flexibility.

i. Maximum Use of Offensive Action. Defending units maintain the spirit of the offensive primarily by the mental flexibility and attitude of their small unit leaders. Combat patrols and limited objective attacks assist in maintaining this spirit.

j. Dispersion. The rifle platoon organizes the terrain to best accomplish its mission without regard for dispersion in relation to nuclear effects.

Section II. FORWARD RIFLE PLATOON IN DEFENSE
(fig. 27)

97. General

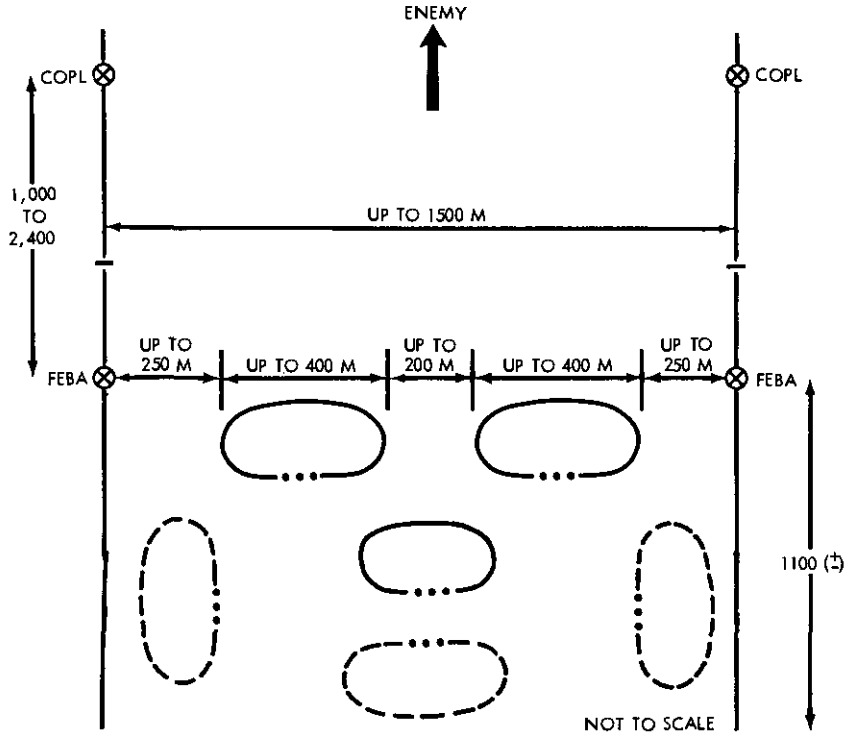
A forward rifle platoon is assigned a portion of the company defense area to organize and defend. It organizes its assigned area to provide the maximum firepower in the expected direction of enemy attack, to protect the flanks, and to support adjacent units. The platoon leader coordinates the employment of his platoon with any attached or supporting weapons located within the platoon area.

a. Boundaries. Boundaries are extended forward and to the rear of the FEBA to indicate the company area of responsibility. Platoon boundaries are not normally used in defensive operations.

b. Coordinating Points. These points, which are indicated on boundaries, serve two purposes. They indicate the general trace of the FEBA and designate places on the ground where adjacent leaders coordinate their defensive plans to insure mutual support.

c. Forward Edge of the Battle Area (FEBA). The FEBA is the line formed by the forward defensive positions of the forward rifle platoons. It intersects boundaries at coordinating points.

d. Frontage. On ideal terrain, the forward rifle platoon may physically occupy a frontage of up to 400 meters. The distance



NOTE: FRONTAGES INDICATED ARE MAXIMUM AND ARE USED ONLY WHEN IDEAL DEFENSIVE TERRAIN EXISTS. (FOR A DISCUSSION OF IDEAL TERRAIN SEE FM 7-11)

Figure 27. Forward rifle company in defense (schematic) (guide only).

between two man foxholes should not exceed a maximum of 20 meters in open terrain. For single holes, the figure is halved. An unoccupied area of up to 200 meters may exist between two forward platoons of the rifle company, depending on observation and fields of fire, terrain, and other factors. Factors which determine the platoon frontage and distances between positions are—

(1) The frontage and mission assigned the company and platoon.
(2) The presence of obstacles.
(3) Terrain characteristics.
(4) The strength of the platoon and attachments.
(5) The enemy's strength, characteristics, and capabilities.

e. Depth. The depth of a forward rifle platoon is the distance between the squad primary and supplementary positions. The platoon leader selects squad and crew-served weapons supplementary positions to defend against an attack from the flanks and

rear. This depth may be up to 200 meters. Supplementary positions should have good fields of fire and covered and concealed routes from the primary positions.

98. Employment of Squads

(fig. 28)

a. The three rifle squads and weapons squad are located to take maximum advantage of the natural defensive strength of the terrain and the capabilities of weapons. The rifle squads are employed generally abreast with maximum firepower toward the expected direction of enemy attack.

b. The rifle squads prepare and occupy primary positions usually on the military crest. The platoon leader assigns each squad an area to organize and a sector of fire. Each sector overlaps with the adjacent squad's sector and the sectors of the two flank squads overlap with adjacent platoons (fig. 28). The squad leader coordinates with other weapons located in his area.

c. The platoon leader positions the weapons of the weapons squad within the rifle squad areas where they can provide the platoon with maximum support. He assigns the mission and general firing location for each weapon.

d. The company commander may specify that certain areas between the platoons or adjacent units be covered with machine-gun or other automatic weapons fire.

99. Plan of Defense

The platoon leader's plan of defense includes a *fire plan, organization of the terrain, security measures, a command and observation post, communication, and control measures.*

a. Fire Planning.

(1) The platoon leader familiarizes himself with the company fire plan. He uses a map, overlay, or sketch to memorize the location and designated numbers of artillery, mortar concentrations, and barrages in his area. Normally, an 81-mm mortar forward observer will operate in the platoon area and will assist the platoon leader in planning, calling for, and adjusting indirect fires. When time and facilities permit, the platoon leader issues maps, overlays, or sketches to his subordinate leaders. The platoon leader coordinates the fires of his organic and attached weapons with the company fire support plan for maximum defense of the platoon area. The fire plan submitted to the company commander should consist of all of the following: principal direction of fire for the

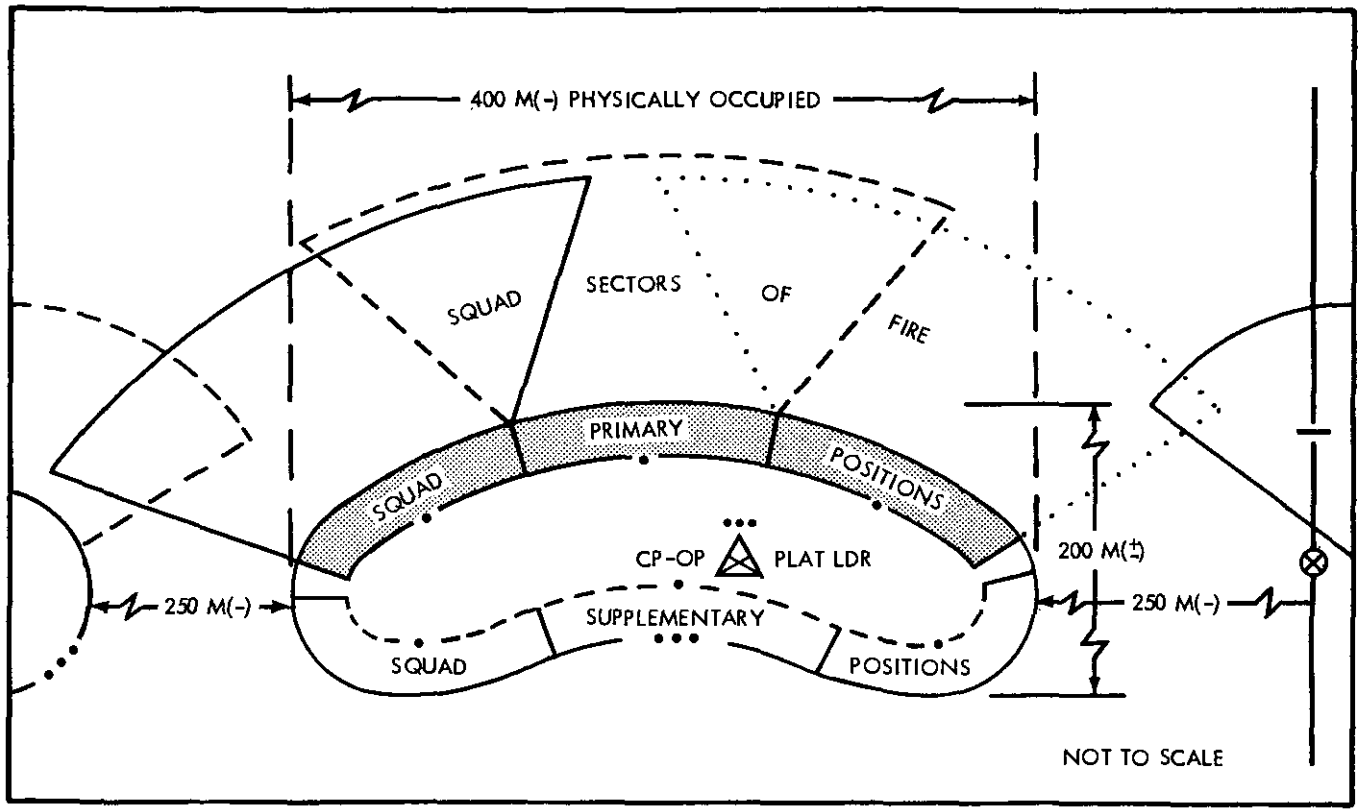


Figure 28. Forward rifle platoon in defense (schematic) (guide only).

antitank weapons and attached direct fire weapons, firing positions and missions (sectors of fire and FPL's or PDF's if assigned) for machineguns, squad primary and supplementary positions, platoon CP-OP, security posts, concentrations and barrages employed in his defensive area, location of surveillance devices, and the firing positions and missions of supporting weapons located in his area. Figure 29 is a sample fire plan.

(2) The platoon leader may assign certain automatic weapons or grenadiers their general firing positions and principal direction of fire to mutually support an adjacent platoon or cover a dangerous avenue of approach. Normally, the squad leader employs both these weapons.

(3) The platoon machineguns are positioned to cover the most dangerous avenues of foot approach into the platoon area. The company commander may require that

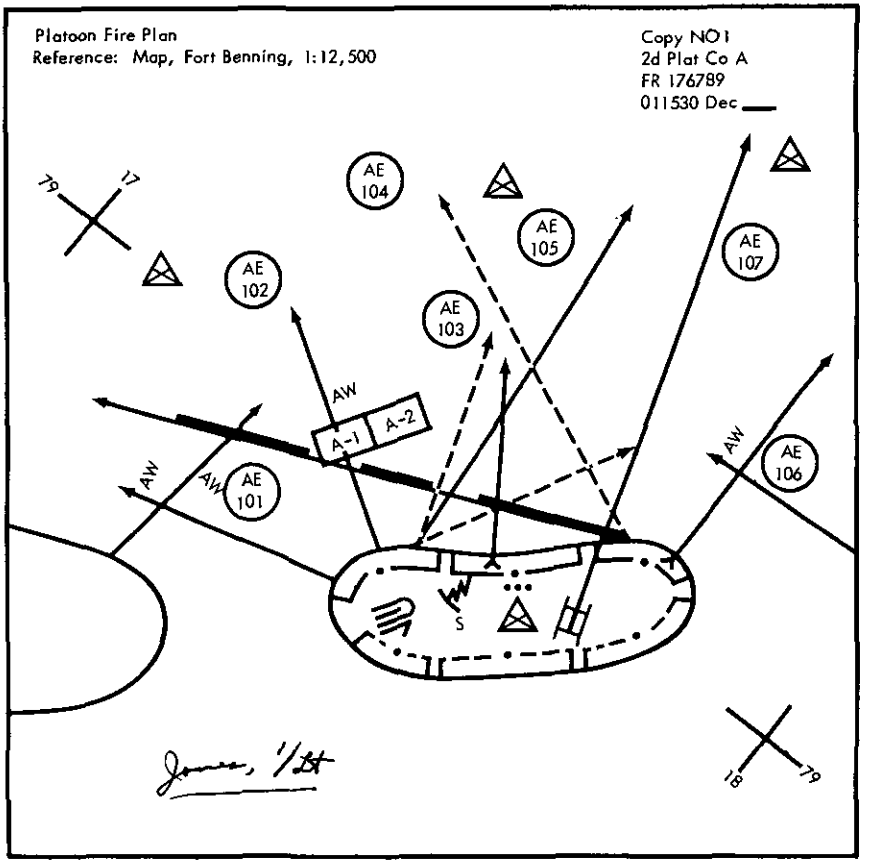


Figure 29. Platoon fire plan (overlay type).

machineguns exchange fire support with an adjacent platoon. While the most desirable way to employ the machineguns is in pairs, the number of foot approaches into the platoon area may require they be employed singly. The terrain should provide grazing fire before FPL's are assigned. If the terrain does not permit the use of final protective lines, the platoon leader assigns the machineguns a principal direction of fire and sector of fire, or only a sector of fire. The platoon leader selects general firing positions for the machineguns and plans for alternate and supplementary positions. When employed in pairs, the machineguns should be far enough apart to avoid being neutralized by one incoming mortar or artillery round.

(4) The platoon antitank weapons are employed by the platoon leader to provide close-in antitank protection for the platoon area. The platoon leader selects a general firing position and a principal direction of fire for each antitank weapon. Their locations and principal directions of fire are coordinated with other antitank weapons located within the platoon area. The antitank weapons may also be employed against enemy crew-served weapons and grouped personnel. Alternate and supplementary positions are selected.

(5) Fire control measures are included in the platoon leader's defense order. These measures may include the designation of terrain features which the enemy must reach before the platoon opens fire and/or signals for final protective fires.

(6) The platoon leader increases the effectiveness of his defense by the use of mines, barbed wire, trip flares, portable flamethrowers, and field expedients.

(7) Authority to call for final protective fires is established in the battalion defense order. This authority is frequently delegated to the forward rifle platoon leaders.

b. Security. Platoon security consists of measures taken by the platoon to minimize enemy observation and surprise. Security measures may be either active or passive.

(1) *Active measures.*

(*a*) The company security echelon established immediately forward and in rear of the company is called local security. Local security is a series of security posts and patrols that cover the area to the front, flanks, and rear of the platoon to provide warning of the ap-

proach of the enemy. Security posts are established by the forward platoons on order of the company commander. Coordination with the company commander is necessary to prevent conflict with patrols operating forward of the battle area and with the registering of fires. Where possible, security posts are located within rifle support distance of the FEBA. They consist of two or three men from the rifle squads provided with a means of communication. Flares, barbed wire, night viewing devices, and noisemaking devices increase the effectiveness of the security elements. Pyrotechnics may be effectively utilized by security posts to provide illumination and warning through prearranged signals.

(*b*) The platoon leader plans for security within his platoon area. Enough members of the platoon are kept alert to maintain an effective warning system. During the preparation of the area, a minimum of one sentinel is posted in each squad area to give warning of enemy ground or air approach, and a skeleton crew is maintained on each crew-served weapon.

(*c*) At night and during periods of limited visibility, additional security measures are necessary. Within the platoon area at night, the number of soldiers kept on the alert varies. When the enemy normally attacks at night, and is close to the position, the entire platoon may be kept on the alert. However, the platoon leader must keep his men prepared for future action by permitting them periods of rest. When the combat outpost is employed to the front, two men kept alert in each squad area may be sufficient. The frequency of relief for sentinels and listening posts is affected by such considerations as the physical condition of the men, effects of extreme weather conditions, morale of the troops, available troops, and anticipated operations. As a guide, relief every two hours is desirable.

(2) *Passive measures.* Passive security measures include camouflage of positions and installations, control of movement, noise and light discipline, and minimum radio and telephone traffic.

(3) *Surveillance devices.* Infrared and radar surveillance devices are used to extend the surveillance capacity to detect the enemy, especially during periods of poor visibility.

(a) *Infrared weapons sight.* This infrared device may be mounted on all infantry small arms weapons. It is a line-of-sight instrument that is limited by dense undergrowth and trees; therefore, lanes of observation must be cleared to obtain maximum effectiveness. It is normally employed on or near an automatic weapon so that targets of opportunity can be immediately engaged by an effective volume of fire. Infrared viewing devices mounted on armored vehicles may also be used for surveillance.

(b) *Radar set AN–PPS–4 (short range).* This lightweight, portable radar set, organic to the company, can detect moving personnel and vehicles at ranges up to 7,800 meters. One man can place the set in operation in ten minutes and the set can be transported in two one-man loads. It is a line-of-sight instrument normally employed within the forward platoon defense areas for surveillance of the company front.

c. Command and Observation Post. The platoon leader selects a combined command post-observation post (CP-OP) to observe a majority of his platoon area and control the platoon. Preferably the platoon CP-OP has cover for all personnel and concealed routes to the rear. The platoon leader locates the platoon sergeant where he can best assist in controlling the platoon. When the platoon sergeant is located at the platoon CP-OP, he assists the platoon leader in receiving and reporting enemy information, controlling the fires of the platoon and handling administrative functions such as feeding and resupplying. In the platoon leader's absence he takes charge of the platoon. When located away from the CP-OP, he maintains contact with the platoon leader and controls that portion of the platoon most difficult for the platoon leader to control from the CP-OP.

d. Control and Communication.

(1) The platoon headquarters has a telephone in the company wire net and a radio in the company radio net. The platoon has its own internal radio and wire nets. Voice commands, arm-and-hand signals, and prearranged field expedient means of communication are used. The platoon leader also may use the communication facilities of forward observers and any attached or supporting units located within the platoon area. When necessary, he moves to the threatened area to achieve personal control.

(2) Additional telephones may be provided for the platoon to use on security posts.

100. Planning the Defense

Upon receipt of the company defense order, the platoon leader makes an estimate of the situation (par. 10), and plans the use of the available time. The more time the platoon has to clear fields of fire, prepare firing data, register fires, camouflage, and prepare positions and obstacles, the more successful the defense will be. The platoon leader plans to make the best use of the available time which will insure an adequate defense plan. Based upon his experience, he allots a portion of the time for his own terrain reconnaissance and planning and a portion of the time for the reconnaissance and planning of his subordinate leaders (par. 9).

a. Preliminary Plan. Based on his initial estimate, the platoon leader plans for the employment of his platoon. His plans serve as a basis for future planning and should include the primary positions for the rifle squads, machineguns, and antitank means, final protective lines or principal directions of fire, and sectors of fire for the machineguns, principal directions of fire for the antitank weapons, and the location for the platoon CP-OP. The platoon leader announces his plan to those persons who will accompany him on the reconnaissance.

b. Planning Sequence. The platoon leader arranges for—

(1) *Movement of the platoon.* Based on available time and his plan, the platoon leader plans for the movement of the platoon to insure no time is lost in preparation of the defensive position. Instructions will be provided by the company commander pertaining to the move including the route to be used, order of march, the location of the new assembly area, time of arrival and disposition in the new area. The platoon is brought forward by the senior noncommissioned officer present.

(2) *Reconnaissance.* Using his plan as a guide, the platoon leader plans the reconnaissance of his entire area. He will arrange to coordinate with certain leaders at specified points and times during his reconnaissance. The platoon leader determines who will accompany him on the reconnaissance. Normally, the weapons squad leader accompanies him to assist in the selection of missions and positions for the machineguns and antitank weapons. If time is limited the platoon sergeant may be assigned specific tasks on the reconnaissance; for example, the selection of the location of the CP-OP, squad supplementary positions, and routes of supply and evacuation.

(3) *Issuance of warning order.* The platoon leader informs his subordinates as early as possible when, where, and

to whom he will issue his order. The order is normally issued to the platoon sergeant, squad leaders, and the leaders of all attachments. When the terrain and enemy situation permits, he plans to orient his leaders and issue his order from a vantage point overlooking the platoon area.

(4) *Coordination.* The platoon leader plans to coordinate with adjacent unit leaders and with leaders or representatives of supporting units, units in contact, or other unit leaders with whom he may come in contact during the defense. Many of these leaders will be present for the company commander's order and certain coordination can be accomplished at this time. The purpose of coordination is to exchange information on plans of operation to insure there is no conflict between units and insure complete and adequate coverage at the area.

c. Reconnaissance. While the platoon leader makes his ground reconnaissance, he continues his estimate of the situation. On his reconnaissance, he completes his terrain analysis and selects primary and supplementary squad positions and sectors, weapons positions and missions, locations for security posts, and the CP-OP location. He notes the effect of the terrain on his tentative plan and he confirms or changes it accordingly. During his reconnaissance he coordinates with adjacent and supporting unit leaders as planned.

d. Complete Plan. After the reconnaissance, the platoon leader receives recommendations from the subordinates who assisted him on the reconnaissance. Based on their recommendations and his personal reconnaissance, he completes his estimate of the situation. He then finalizes his plan of defense and prepares notes to be used in issuing his order.

e. Issue Order. At the time and place previously designated, he meets his subordinate leaders to issue the platoon defense order. The platoon order should follow the standard operation order sequence (par. 11) and contain all the necessary instructions for his subordinates. After issuing the order, time permitting, he walks the area with his subordinate leaders and points out squad areas of responsibility and sectors of fire, and weapons positions and missions.

f. Supervise. The platoon leader with the assistance of his subordinate leader actively supervises his platoon to insure that the order is carried out as intended. If he notes a deficiency or a misunderstanding, he takes immediate corrective action. His supervision is vigorous and is continued throughout the defense. Only

by active supervision can the platoon leader be sure his orders are carried out.

g. Submits Fire Plan to the Company Commander. The fire plan may be submitted in accurate sketch form or as an overlay. The fire plan is as complete and detailed as time permits. Changes are submitted as they occur. One copy of the fire plan is retained by the platoon leader. Figure 29 is an example of a platoon fire plan.

101. Rifle Squad in Defense
(fig. 30)

a. Rifle squads are assigned sectors by the platoon leader as described in paragraphs 98 and 99. Their frontages vary from approximately 30 meters in unfavorable terrain to 100 meters in favorable terrain. Up to 25 meters may be added to the squad frontage for each crew-served weapon in its area.

b. Within each squad the fire teams are employed on line with fire team integrity maintained; each team occupies about half the squad area. The choice of single or double foxholes is determined by squad strength, fields of fire, and morale. Some advantages of two-man foxholes are continuous observation (while one man is resting or working, the other is alert), assistance and reassurance from each other (including first aid and assumption of both sectors of fire), and redistribution of ammunition between the two.

c. The squad prepares supplementary positions as directed by the platoon leader. These positions are organized the same as the primary positions but are oriented in a different direction. As time permits, communication trenches are prepared to provide covered routes to supplementary positions. Although the squad does not normally prepare alternate positions, additional fighting positions may be obtained with the improvement of communications trenches.

d. Upon receiving the platoon defense order, the squad leader follows troop leading procedure (par. 9) and develops a squad order (par. 11). The order is issued on the terrain to be defended. The order is clear and definite so that the men in the squad understand the mission and the plan. If time is limited, the squad leader may issue the order as the men are being located or after they have started the preparation of the position. The squad leader's defense order follows the operation order format which includes—

(1) Information of the enemy and friendly forces, including the location and identification of adjacent squads and platoons; information as to supporting weapons located within the squad area.

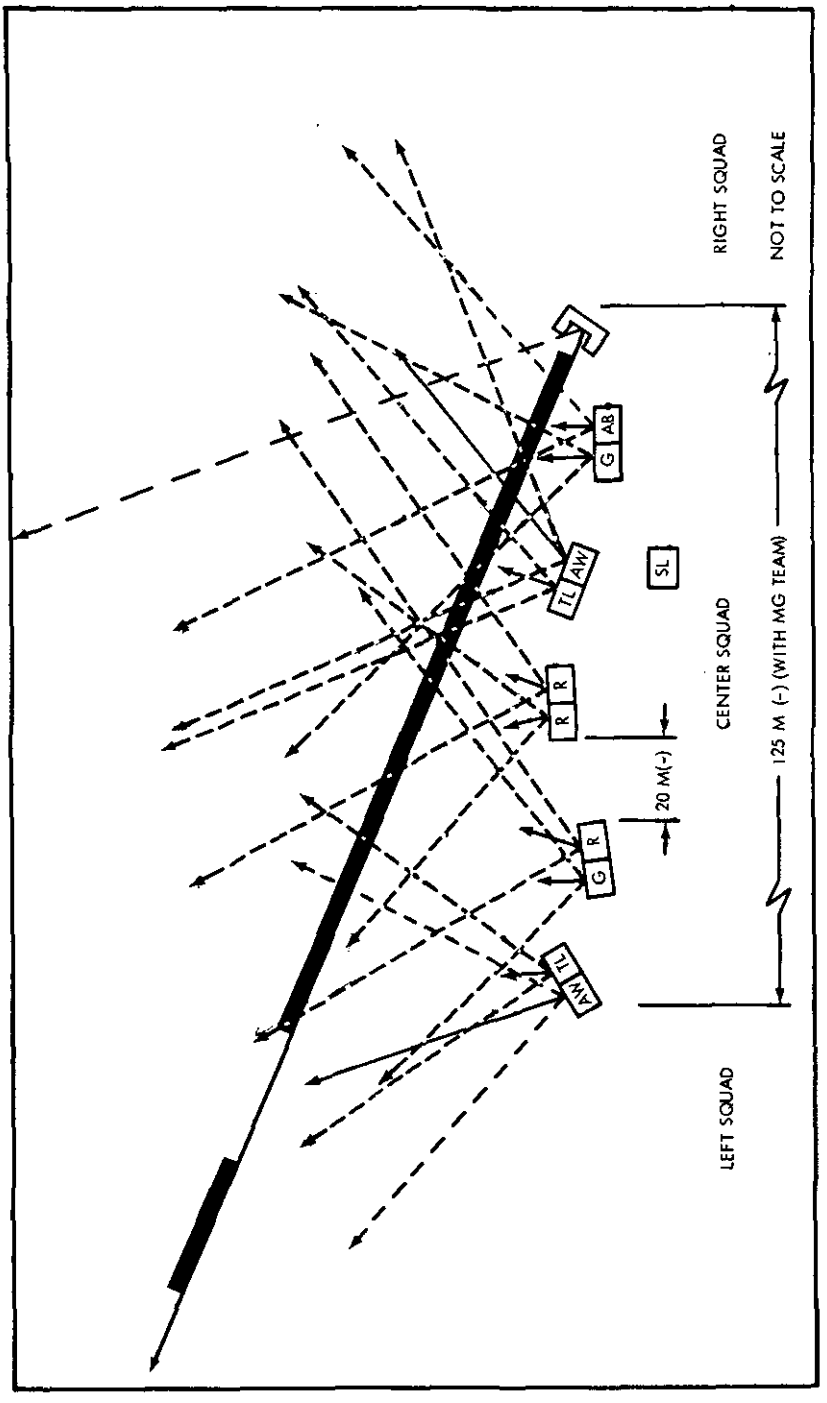


Figure 30. Forward rifle squad in defense (schematic).

(2) Mission of the squad.

(3) Positions and sectors of fire for each rifleman, grenadier, and automatic weapon. Provisions for antitank defense by assigning squad antitank weapons to selected members of the squad. Organization of the ground, including the type of emplacements, other instructions, and priority of work.

(4) Administrative and supply details such as ammunition resupply and the location of the aid station.

(5) Prearranged signals such as pyrotechnics or audible signals designating when to open fire or deliver final protective fires; and the location of the squad leader and platoon leader.

e. After issuing the squad defense order, the squad leader moves his men directly to their firing positions. Local security posts are manned. At least one sentinel is posted in the squad area. Before work is started, the squad leader lies down with each man and verifies the observation and sector of fire of his position. During his check of the positions, the squad leader insures that sectors of fire overlap and the desired density of fire can be delivered on avenues of approach. The squad leader positions himself where he can best observe his assigned area, control his squad, and maintain contract with the platoon leader. The squad leader's responsibilities during the preparation of the position include—

(1) Effecting necessary coordination when other weapons are located in the squad area.

(2) Supervising the preparation of foxholes.

(3) Supervising the preparation of range cards to include assisting in the estimation of ranges to prominent landmarks.

(4) Supervising the clearing of fields of fire.

(5) Supervising the preparation of supplementary positions.

(6) Inspecting the positions to insure that camouflage and overhead cover are sufficient.

(7) Insuring all weapons have been recently zeroed.

(8) Preparing a sketch in duplicate of the squad's sector of fire, showing prominent landmarks, or terrain features and the ranges to them. He gives one sketch to the platoon leader and keeps one copy for himself.

f. Selection of firing positions is essential for each rifleman.

(1) The squad leader in conjunction with his fire team leaders selects firing positions for each riflemen within the squad

and assigns him a sector of fire. These sectors of fire overlap to insure complete coverage of the squad sector.

(2) The squad leader selects firing positions and sectors of fire for the squad automatic weapons. If possible the sector of fire assigned each automatic weapon covers the entire squad sector. If not, the automatic weapons are assigned overlapping sectors to cover the squad sector of fire. They may fire into other sectors to assist if no targets appear in their own sector.

(3) The squad leader assigns the exact firing position and sectors of fire for the grenadiers, if not previously selected by the platoon leader. The sector should be the squad sector or large enough to overlap with adjacent grenadiers. It may be used both as a direct or indirect fire weapon against enemy foot troops at ranges up to 400 meters. Appropriate targets are crew-served weapons and grouped personnel. Grenadiers will fill the gaps in the final protective fires of other weapons and engage other appropriate targets.

(4) Team leaders are located on line and are assigned a sector of fire. They also assist in the control of the squad. In the absence of the squad leader, the senior fire team leader commands the squad.

(5) Each firing position, to include supplementary positions, must be camouflaged, and unnecessary noise and movement held to a minimum. The squad leader requires his men to—

(*a*) Stay within shadowed areas whenever possible.

(*b*) Utilize branches and leaves to break up the outline of soldiers, weapons, and equipment.

(*c*) Conceal mess gear, range cards, rations and ammunition containers, and all other light-colored or glittering objects.

(*d*) Break up solid areas of color and blend them with the natural surroundings.

(*e*) Hide or dispose of fresh earth uncovered while digging foxholes and weapons emplacements. Change the regular outline of emplacements by camouflaging them with natural material.

(*f*) Use only selected paths for movement within and out of the position. If it becomes necessary to move cross-country, remove or conceal all evidence of the movement.

(6) In mechanized platoons, the extra machinegun of each rifle squad may be employed by the platoon leader in the same manner as the machineguns of the weapons squad. Two riflemen from the squad man the gun.

g. The rifle squad provides for its security by alertness and by implementing its part of the platoon security plan.

h. Personal contact is the squad leader's means of control. However, his control is often limited by the distance his oral commands can be heard and his visual signals seen. The squad leader anticipates the difficulties of control during the conduct of defense and plans expedients to assist him to overcome these difficulties. Passing information and orders from foxhole to foxhole is one method. Field expedients should be developed to meet specific situations, such as stringing wire or string along the line of foxholes and establishing a set of pull signals to transmit specific messages. Arm-and-hand signals, pyrotechnics, or small arms fires may also be used. Communication trenches should be dug between foxholes as time permits.

102. Weapons Squad in Defense

a. The machineguns and antitank weapons of the weapons squad are the platoon's organic fire support.

b. The platoon leader assigns the missions and general firing positions for these weapons. He will assign supplementary and alternate positions as necessary.

c. The weapons squad leader positions himself to control his entire squad. If this is not possible, he controls the weapons covering the most dangerous approach or assists the platoon leader in the platoon CP-OP. In the absence of the squad leader, gunners control their own weapons.

d. The weapons squad leader normally accompanies the platoon leader on his reconnaissance to make recommendations concerning the positions of the weapons of the squad. The platoon leader select their general positions and coordinates their fires with adjacent platoons and the company fire support plan.

e. On receipt of the platoon defense order, the weapons squad leader, following troop leading procedures (par. 9), develops his plan and issues his order. He issues this order from a central location to point out specific positions.

f. After issuing the squad defense order, the squad leader moves his teams directly to their firing positions. Each weapon is set up and prepared to fire in its assigned sector. Weapons must be checked to insure they are in proper and effective working order. The squad leader and the platoon leader check

the observation and sectors of fire afforded by the selected positions and complete the coordination with the rifle squads. If final protective lines have been assigned by the platoon leader, the weapons squad leader checks the final protective lines and reports the extent of grazing fire and dead space to the platoon leader. This is done with the assistant gunner walking the final protective line while the gunner sights down the weapon and records the extent of dead space and grazing fire. (Observation from behind the gun and from the flank also assist in locating dead space and grazing fire.) The squad leader allocates the initial ammunition supply and supervises clearing of fields of fire; preparation of primary, alternate and supplementary positions, and range cards for each firing position. When not firing, the machineguns are always laid on their final protective line or principal direction of fire.

g. Security for the teams of the weapons squad is provided by having at least one member of the team on the alert and ready to deliver effective fire at all times. The rifle squad sentries posted in each squad area warn of the enemy approach and furnish additional security for the team.

h. The platoon leader locates the machineguns along the forward edge of the battle area to provide maximum fires for the platoon, to provide fire support for adjacent units, and to participate in the delivery of final protective fires. The goal is to place a curtain of fire between the assaulting enemy and the friendly positions. It is desirable that these fires stretch completely across the front of the company and tie in with adjacent units. The platoon leader designates the general firing location for each machinegun and assigns its mission. The weapons squad leader selects the exact location for the gun to best accomplish its mission. The sector of fire should be selected to engage the enemy on the most dangerous approaches during the close defensive and final protective fires. It is desirable to employ the machineguns in pairs (both firing generally the same final protective line and sector of fire) to enable continuous fire in case one gun is destroyed, malfunctions, or is reloading. When the machineguns are employed in pairs they are easier to control and resupply. When the situation dictates, the machineguns are employed singly (firing different final protective lines or PDF's, and sectors of fire). If the terrain does not permit both flanking and grazing fire, the platoon leader may assign the machinegun(s) a principal direction of fire (PDF) and sector of fire, or only a sector of fire.

i. Antitank weapons positions should afford oblique fire at the armor approach, covered routes for ease of movement to alter-

nate or supplementary positions, and protection from enemy direct and indirect fire weapons.

j. The alternate and supplementary positions which the platoon leader selects for the machineguns and antitank weapons should have covered approaches. Communication trenches are often necessary.

k. Ammunition bearers prepare positions nearby to provide a continuous supply of ammunition, assist in the security and close-in protection of the weapons positions, and replace injured crew members. They may be placed in a position with a rifle squad member.

l. If crew-served weapons are emplaced on the platoon's flank, riflemen or automatic weapons are provided for their close-in protection.

103. Preparation for the Defense

a. Upon arrival of the platoon, security is posted and crew-served weapons are immediately placed in temporary firing positions to cover the most dangerous approaches into the area. Squads move directly to their assigned areas. Where applicable, sectors of fire, principal directions of fire, and final protective lines are assigned. The platoon leader's defense order prescribes the priority of work and time limit in which work is to be accomplished. If the company commander does not prescribe a priority of work, the platoon leader establishes his own.

b. During the preparation of the positions, all leaders closely supervise the actions of their men. No unnecessary noise or movement which might disclose the position is allowed. Camouflage is concurrent with the preparation of positions. Range cards are prepared and checked. Leaders verify sectors of fire and principal directions of fire or final protective lines. Adjustments are made to correct deficiencies. Individuals are questioned to insure that orders have been thoroughly disseminated and understood.

c. Preparation of the area is continuous. As long as the area is occupied, improvements are made to strengthen the defense.

104. Conduct of the Defense

a. The company commander alerts the forward platoon leaders prior to the withdrawal of the combat outpost to facilitate their withdrawal through the FEBA. Forces along the FEBA cover the withdrawal of the combat outpost by fire if necessary. The conduct of defense of a forward rifle platoon begins when observation of the enemy is sufficient to permit delivery of effective fire by weapons organic, attached, or supporting the forward platoon. As the enemy continues the advance, he is brought under an ever-

increasing volume of fire. Security posts located forward of the battle area report information of the enemy and call for and adjust indirect fires. When the advance of the enemy threatens these security elements they are withdrawn by the platoon leader to avoid close combat.

b. All leaders and forward observers in the forward platoon area search for indirect fire targets. Direct fire weapons located along the FEBA engage enemy targets within their effective range. If enemy armor is not active in the area, antitank weapons withhold their fires or engage suitable targets such as enemy crew-served weapons and groups of enemy personnel. Machineguns, automatic weapons, riflemen, and grenadiers fire at appropriate targets within their assigned sector. If it appears that the enemy is searching for our defensive positions and surprise fire is desired, direct fire is withheld until the enemy is well within effective range of the riflemen. While surprise fire may have a great psychological effect on the enemy, it must be realized that valuable time and space is lost. Leaders actively control the fires of their units to insure that ammunition is not wasted. Weapons are shifted to alternate or supplementary positions as required.

c. As the enemy continues to approach the platoon area, he is engaged by an increasing volume of fire. Mines, flame fougasse, medium artillery, and antitank weapons are used against armor; while small arms fire, mortar fire, grenade fire, and light artillery are directed at any dismounted infantry. Every effort is made to separate the tanks and dismounted infantry.

d. If the enemy continues to advance through the close defensive fires and starts his assault, the platoon leader calls for his final protective fires. The machineguns fire their final protective lines. If FPL's have not been assigned, they engage all appropriate targets in their sectors of fire. Mortars and artillery fire their barrages and all weapons fire maximum effective rate of fire. All weapons continue to fire until told to stop. The length of time that final protective fires will be fired is dependent on availability of ammunition, or may be directed. After this specified period of time the weapons will fire at a reduced rate or cease firing; however, final protective fires may be repeated as often as necessary. Since final protective fires consume vast quantities of ammunition, they should not be called for until maximum use has been made of the close defensive fires. If the enemy gets through the final protective fires, he is repelled by close combat (all combat conducted within hand grenade range of the FEBA to include small arms fire, grenades, hand-to-hand fighting, and indirect fires on position).

e. If the platoon area is penetrated or is threatened from the

flanks or rear, the platoon leader may move men and weapons along communication trenches from the least engaged area into supplementary positions to meet the threat. Direct and indirect fire weapons fire into the penetrated area and across the neck of the penetration to prevent reinforcements.

f. If the enemy is repelled, he is pursued by all available fire. Local security is reestablished and patrols may be ordered forward to maintain contact. Fires are delivered in likely enemy regrouping areas. Troops along the FEBA reorganize, evacuate casualties, redistribute and resupply ammunition, and strengthen their defense.

g. During the conduct of defense, all leaders keep their next higher commander informed of the situation. Aggressive leadership is essential. Normally the platoon leader and squad leaders do not fire except during close combat when their fires may be required; however, they may fire to point out a target or as a signal to open fire.

h. The duties of the rifle platoon leader during the conduct of defense include—

(1) Close supervision to insure the security plan is followed.
(2) Fire control, including the opening of initial fires and shifting of fire.
(3) Calling for and adjusting supporting fires on targets of opportunity.
(4) Shifting of men within the platoon position.
(5) Keeping the company commander informed of the situation.
(6) Direct positive leadership at critical points.
(7) Insuring additional ammunition and equipment is made available.
(8) During lulls in combat, reorganization and reestablishment of the defense.

105. Conduct of Defense at Night

a. At night, patrols, listening posts, and surveillance devices detect the advance and infiltration of the enemy.

b. Local security elements report the advance of the enemy and call for illuminants and supporting fires. When the enemy threatens these security elements, they are withdrawn by the platoon leader before they become engaged in close combat.

c. As the enemy approaches, mortar and artillery illumination, infrared viewing devices, and radar surveillance teams are used to detect his movement. Trip flares and field expedients such as flame fougasse provide additional illumination. Fires are opened

on order of leaders when surprise is desired. As a general rule, weapons do not open fire until targets are visible. Rigid fire control by all leaders is required to prevent indiscriminate firing, which results in the needless expenditure of ammunition and disclosure of firing positions. Indirect fires should be used to the maximum. Fires of crew-served weapons are delivered using range cards, aiming stakes and predetermined firing data.

d. Other aspects of the conduct of defense at night are generally the same as the conduct during daylight except that surprise and close combat are more likely.

Section III. RESERVE PLATOON OF THE FORWARD RIFLE COMPANY IN DEFENSE

(fig. 27)

106. General

a. Positions and Missions. The reserve platoon is normally positioned in the rear of the forward platoons to provide depth to the company defensive area. The company commander assigns the reserve platoon a primary position and one or more supplementary positions. It is moved from one position to another as required by the enemy situation. The company commander assigns the reserve one or more of the following missions and states the priority of each.

(1) Limit penetrations.

(2) Protect the company flanks and rear.

(3) Support the forward platoons by fire.

(4) Perform surveillance and provide security in the company rear area.

(5) Counterattack.

(6) Employment on COPL.

b. Location. The reserve platoon is located on the best defensive terrain in rear of the forward platoons from which it can accomplish the mission(s) assigned, but not so far forward as to permit it to come under the influence of enemy fires directed at the forward platoons.

c. Organization of the Position. The organization of a reserve platoon position is generally the same as for a forward rifle platoon except that final protective fires are not planned. The entire platoon normally occupies its primary position. When the terrain makes it difficult for the reserve to move to supplementary positions, it may have to organize and occupy more than one position

initially. If so, the integrity of the rifle squads is maintained, though the weapons squad may be divided.

(1) Positions should provide for three squads to be placed abreast and are prepared to permit shifting of their fires to the flanks and rear by moving to and occupying squad supplementary positions.

(2) With the exception of the machineguns, the fire planning of the reserve platoon is the same as that of the forward platoons. The machinguns of the reserve platoon are normally employed singly because there is a greater area of responsibility, and because there may be more avenues of approach than pairs of machineguns. Machineguns are assigned a sector of fire or a principal direction of fire and a sector. Machineguns are not assigned final protective lines. Alternate and supplementary positions are prepared for each gun. Consideration should be given to the employment of the guns on the bipod to obtain wider sectors of fire.

(3) The reserve platoon leader locates his CP-OP within the platoon position where he can best observe his area of responsibility and control the fires of his platoon. Terrain permitting, the CP-OP should be located to provide observation of the forward platoons' defense areas and the company flanks and rear.

(4) The reserve platoon leader employs the same security measures as the forward platoons.

107. Missions of the Reserve Platoon

a. Limit Penetrations. The company commander determines the possible areas of penetration and based on this determination the reserve platoon prepares one or more positions to limit penetrations. To limit an enemy penetration, the reserve platoon occupies the terrain from which, by fire, it can block the enemy's advance. The forward platoons may play a decisive part in limiting a penetration by placing fire across the neck and flanks of the penetration while the reserve platoon blocks the enemy's forward progress and fires on the lead elements of the penetration. Every effort is made to prevent the enemy from reinforcing the penetration and reorganizing within the penetrated area. When the reserve platoon is engaged in limiting a penetration, the counterattack will be accomplished by the reserve of a higher echelon. Artillery and mortar fires are vital to contain and reduce the penetration.

b. Protect the Company Flanks and Rear. To gain all-round defense, the reserve platoon prepares positions to protect the company flanks and rear. The company commander designates specific avenues of approach into the rear area that the reserve platoon will block. In protecting a flank, the positions of the reserve platoon must be coordinated with the supplementary positions of the forward platoons and adjacent units. The reserve platoon may be ordered to assume positions to protect the flank when a penetration has occurred in the area of an adjacent company.

c. Support the Forward Platoons by Fire. When assigned this mission the platoon is located where it can support the forward platoons by firing into gaps between them and on their flanks and rear. The position is organized within effective range of the forward platoon's primary positions so that effective fire can be placed on the enemy elements that penetrate these forces. The position should be far enough to the rear of the squad supplementary positions of the forward platoons to avoid being under the fires that are directed at the forward platoons. Because of the width of the company front, the reserve platoon may prepare more than one position to accomplish this mission in different portions of the company area. The reserve platoon is normally kept intact and is moved by the company commander as the situation requires.

d. Perform Surveillance and Provide Security in the Company Rear Area. The company commander states in detail specific security and surveillance responsibilities of the reserve platoon, as well as for other elements of the company. He provides for sentinels, surveillance and listening posts, patrols, CBR detection devices, electronic surveillance devices, infrared or other night vision devices, trip flares and antipersonnel mines, noisemaking devices, and any other means made available to the company. In addition to the security provided by the reserve platoon, sentinels are posted for the company CP, mortar squads, and crews of attached or supporting weapons in the company rear area. Surveillance posts and listening posts are established by the reserve platoon to provide security for the unoccupied portions of the company rear area. These security elements are located to cover avenues of approach, routes of movement, and key terrain. They normally consist of two to three men, relieved frequently enough to insure alertness, and are equipped with appropriate surveillance devices. Patrols are used primarily to provide security to those areas which cannot be effectively covered by other means and to maintain contact with adjacent units. They may also be used as a means of communication between surveillance or listening posts.

e. Counterattack.

(1) A counterattack at company level is seldom executed, but when executed it is a limited objective attack designed to destroy or eject the enemy in or from an area of penetration and to regain control of the penetrated portions of the battle area. The reserve platoon provides the forward rifle company a limited means with which to counterattack. Plans are made and rehearsed. The reserve platoon remains in position to accomplish its other missions until the counterattack order is given. When the reserve platoon counterattacks, the action must be rapid and aggressive, fully utilizing all available artillery and mortar support. The company commander considers the following before committing the reserve platoon to a counterattack:

(*a*) The platoon is not limiting an enemy penetration.

(*b*) The counterattacking force must have a reasonable chance of success.

(*c*) The enemy penetration is not being reinforced or enlarged.

(*d*) Fire alone has failed to destroy or eject the enemy in the penetrated area.

(*e*) The enemy within the penetrated area has been stopped or slowed by the fires of the forward platoons or other means.

(2) In his planning, the company commander determines likely areas of penetration in his area and plans a counterattack for each. The counterattack plans are numbered or lettered for priority of planning and convenience of reference.

(3) The reserve platoon leader prepares or assists the company commander in the preparation of counterattack plans. He plans for the employment of his platoon upon receipt of the company counterattack order. Counterattack plans are based on a detailed reconnaissance and careful coordination with units occupying positions in the area of expected penetration. Attacking through friendly units is avoided where possible. A counterattack is conducted in the same manner as any other attack (ch. 2).

108. Planning

The planning of the squad and platoon leaders of the reserve platoon is much the same as for the forward platoon as discussed

in paragraphs 97 through 105 with these exceptions—

a. Because of the many missions and positions, reconnaissance and planning is more detailed.

b. Coordination must be made with all possible units.

c. The reserve platoon leader must be thoroughly familiar with the defensive plans of the forward platoons and adjacent companies.

109. Preparation

The preparation of the squad and platoon positions of the reserve platoon is much the same as for a forward platoon with these exceptions—

a. Because of the number of supplementary positions, simultaneous work may be required on two or more positions.

b. The platoon leader must be able to assemble his platoon rapidly from widely separated positions at any time.

110. Conduct of Defense by Reserve Platoon

The reserve platoon prepares its primary and supplementary positions as directed by the company commander. The positions are continuously improved. The platoon occupies its primary position(s) and is prepared at any time to move to supplementary positions. The reserve platoon is immediately responsive to the company commander's orders so as to provide depth and flexibility to the company defense.

Section IV. RIFLE PLATOON ON COMBAT OUTPOST LINE

111. General

a. The combat outpost is a security echelon which denies the enemy close ground observation of the battle area and provides early warning of his advance. Within its capabilities, it delays and disorganizes the enemy and deceives him as to the true location of the battle area. It avoids close combat whenever possible.

b. The battalion commander usually prescribes the general location, control, and composition of the combat outpost. In some situations, the forward companies provide the forces for and control it. They may be employed under battalion control, or platoons may at attached to the forward companies for use on the COPL. The reserve platoon of the forward rifle company may be required to establish that portion of the COPL within the company area of responsibility. The combat outpost in front of each forward company usually consists of a reinforced rifle platoon, preferably mechanized.

c. The forces on the combat outpost line (COPL) are deployed laterally in one echelon in a series of outguards. These outguards vary in size from a half squad to a reinforced squad. Outguards are positioned on or near the topographical crest of the terrain feature in order to obtain maximum observation and long range fires. To insure that the combat outpost can provide early warning of the advance of the enemy, outguards are located where they can obtain overlapping sectors of observation. Adjacent outguards should be capable of mutual fire support and should be located within visual distance of one another.

d. The combat outpost is located on commanding terrain forward of the battle area. This location should provide long range observation to the front and deny the enemy ground that he could use for delivering effective flat trajectory fire and ground observed indirect fire on the battle area. The combat outpost must be far enough forward of the battle area to insure early warning, yet be within supporting distance from the battle area. Covered and concealed routes of withdrawal should be planned for each element of the COP.

e. The combat outpost commander is responsible for his own local security. Security is provided by security posts, patrols, and passive measures. Security posts are established forward of and between outguards. Security posts forward of the combat outpost remain within rifle supporting distance of outguards. Additional security posts may be required at night or during periods of poor visibility to prevent surprise and for complete coverage of the area. In addition to security posts, the combat outpost commander specifies the number of persons kept on alert within each outguard.

f. When observation is limited or when outguards are widely separated, patrols should be used to operate between outguards and security posts at irregular intervals over different routes to avoid establishing a pattern that might be disclosed to the enemy. In addition to providing security, patrols can relay information, check wire (both communication and barbed wire) and minefields, and resupply ammunition and equipment. Following the withdrawal of, or, in the absence of the general outpost, contact is gained and maintained with the enemy by observation posts and patrols forward of the COPL which call artillery and mortar fire on the enemy. These patrols may be furnished from units in the battle area or from the combat outpost. The combat outpost may be used as a patrol base for all patrols operating forward of the COPL. The combat outpost commander's responsibility for patrols forward of the COPL may include a last minute briefing on the enemy situation, coordination of movement forward of the combat

outpost, coordination for the relaying of requests for indirect fires of for the indirect fire support available to the COPL, and arrangements with outgoing patrols to act as a communication relay station.

112. Organization of the Combat Outpost Line
(fig. 31)

a. The outpost commander locates his outguards and weapons to attain mutual fire support across the entire front, to delay, disorganize, and deceive the enemy. Because the combat outpost is incapable of all-round defense, defense in depth, or sustained operations, close combat is avoided.

b. Machineguns are normally employed singly and assigned a principal direction of fire and a sector, or only a sector.

c. Tanks and antitank weapons are positioned for mutual support to engage enemy armor at maximum range.

d. The 81-mm mortars may support the COP from within the battle area. However, if the COP is located beyond effective supporting distance, one or more of the 81-mm mortars may be attached to the COP.

e. Forward observers are employed with the COP to assist in planning, requesting, and adjusting indirect fires in support of the COP. Sufficient forward observers are employed with the COP to provide for overlapping sectors of observation across the front. The COP commander plans fires well forward of, immediately in front of, to the flanks and rear, and within the COP positions.

f. Engineer support may be provided to assist in accomplishing specific tasks such as laying minefields, constructing obstacles, preparing demolition charges, and erecting wire obstacles.

g. Surveillance devices are employed with the COP to detect the advance of the enemy. Communications between the COP commander and the surveillance team insures early warning and enables the commander to take the enemy under fire. Security for surveillance teams is the responsibility of the COP commander. The infrared weapons sight is used to provide close-in observation during periods of darkness.

h. APC's may be attached to the COP to provide mobility.

i. To assist the combat outpost in accomplishing its mission and maintaining control, communications are established between the CP-OP and patrols and elements within the battle area. Wire and radio communication is required from the COPL to the FEBA, and to all outguards. The radios of attached forward observers and tanks may be used as an alternate means of communication.

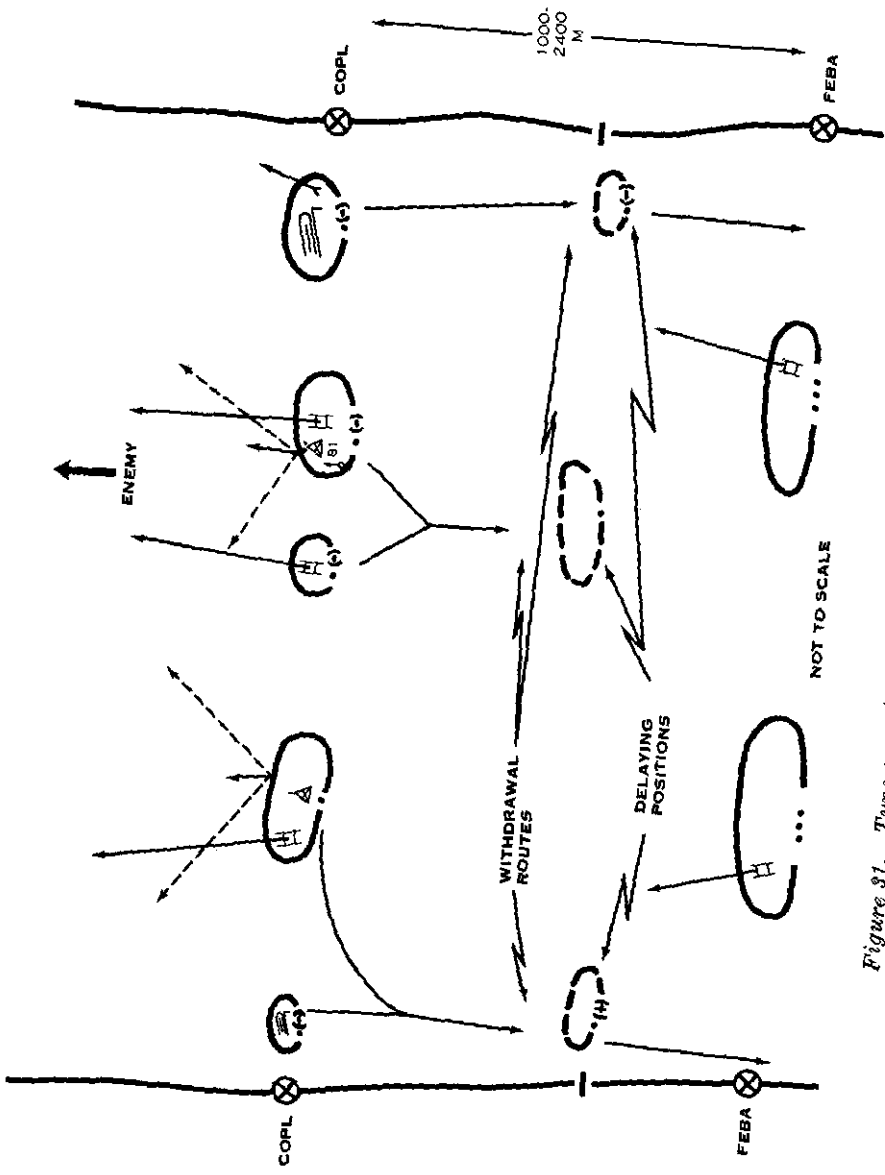


Figure 31. Type organization of the combat outpost (schematic).

Visual and sound signals, patrols and messengers should be planned to augment radio and wire communications. Additional telephones and radios may be requested through the company commander.

113. Withdrawal of the Combat Outpost
(fig. 31)

a. The authority to withdraw the combat outpost may be delegated to the forward company commander. The company commander plans to withdraw the combat outpost before it becomes engaged in close combat. In the event the COP commander loses all communications with his parent unit, he may withdraw the COP when it has accomplished its mission or to prevent its capture or destruction.

b. Routes of withdrawal are selected in advance for each outguard. These routes should provide cover and concealment, avoid lateral movement, permit the withdrawal of the outguards without masking the supporting fires from within the battle area, and be easy to follow under all conditions of visibility. All members of the outguards should be thoroughly familiar with their route of withdrawal and those of adjacent units; and when conditions permit, the withdrawal should be rehearsed. When forced to withdraw by enemy action, the least engaged outguards are withdrawn first. Fires planned in support of these outguards are then shifted to assist the more heavily engaged outguards in breaking contact with the enemy. As the COP withdraws, contact is maintained with the enemy and indirect fires are placed on him. See chapter 4 for a discussion of withdrawal techniques.

c. The COP may be assigned the mission of delaying from successive positions to maintain contact with the enemy. Outguard locations on the delay position should be in the same order as on the COPL. Changes in attachments should be held to the minimum to prevent confusion and delay. The use of successive delay positions should be preplanned and include the preparation of firing data for both direct and indirect fire weapons. Maximum use of natural and artificial obstacles assist in delaying the advance of the enemy.

114. Planning for the Occupation of the COPL

Planning for the occupation of the COPL is much the same as that for the forward platoon leader as is discussed in paragraphs 97 through 105 with these exceptions.

a. Because of the width of the platoon front, reconnaissance and control are difficult.

b. Each outguard must be organized with one individual in command.

c. Coordination must be made with adjacent and support units as well as the platoons on the FEBA.

115. Preparation for the Defense of the COPL

Preparation is as detailed as time permits. Each soldier prepares his position, clears fields of fire, makes reconnaissance of withdrawal routes and subsequent positions, if possible, and coordinates with soldiers on his right and left.

116. Conduct of the Defense of the COPL

a. As the enemy approaches the COPL, all leaders and forward observers search for targets and request the fire of indirect fire weapons. When the enemy comes within range, all weapons along the COPL engage appropriate targets within their assigned sectors.

b. If the enemy withdraws, he is pursued by all available fire. Local security is reestablished. Fires are delivered in likely enemy regrouping areas. Outguards on the combat outpost reorganize, evacuate casualties, redistribute ammunition, and strengthen their defenses.

c. The duties of the combat outpost and outguard commanders during the conduct of defense include—

(1) Supervision of the local security.
(2) Fire control, including opening and shifting fires.
(3) Calling for and adjusting indirect fire on targets of opportunity.
(4) Shifting of men and weapons within the positions.
(5) Keeping the next higher commander informed of the situation.
(6) Positive leadership at critical points.
(7) Insure continuous improvement of the position.
(8) Request ammunition and equipment as needed.

d. The platoon leader on the combat outpost anticipates the order for a withdrawal to avoid close combat. He must evaluate enemy contact to distinguish between enemy patrol activity, probing attacks, and the enemy's main effort. The reporting of enemy actions by the COP provides the company and battalion commanders with the desired early warning and enables prompt withdrawal at the appropriate time.

e. The withdrawal is conducted rapidly to prevent engaged outguards from being overrun or enveloped by the enemy. Outguards break contact and move to the rear using fire and maneuver when necessary (ch. 4).

f. Notification of the withdrawal of the combat outpost consists of three reports; planned time of withdrawal, time the withdrawal actually starts, and time the withdrawal is completed. If radio and wire communication fails, the combat outpost commander utilizes prearranged signals or messengers.

g. When the enemy pursues the platoon to the FEBA, fires of weapons within the battle area cover the withdrawal. The platoon moves rapidly through the FEBA and then accomplishes its next assigned mission.

Section V. SPECIAL DEFENSIVE OPERATIONS

117. Reverse Slope Defense
(fig. 32)

A reverse slope defense is organized on that portion of a terrain feature which is masked by a crest from enemy direct fire and ground observation. Control of the crest by either fire or physical occupation is necessary.

a. The company commander may order the occupation of a reverse slope position under the following conditions.

(1) The forward slope cannot be occupied because of enemy fire
(2) The forward slope has been lost or not yet gained.
(3) The terrain on the reverse slope affords better fields of fire than the forward slope.
(4) Possession of the forward slope is not essential for observation.
(5) To avoid creating an undesirable reentrant or salient.
(6) To assist in achieving deception and surprise.

b. The advantages of the reverse slope defense are—

(1) Enemy ground observation of the battle area is masked.
(2) Enemy direct fire weapons cannot effectively fire on the position.
(3) Enemy indirect fire becomes less effective because of lack of observation.
(4) Tactical surprise is gained by the defender.
(5) More freedom of movement is permitted within the battle area due to the enemy's lack of ground observation.

c. Disadvantages of the reverse slope defense are—

(1) Observation of the enemy is limited.
(2) The range of the direct fire weapons of the defender is limited by the topographical crest of the hill.

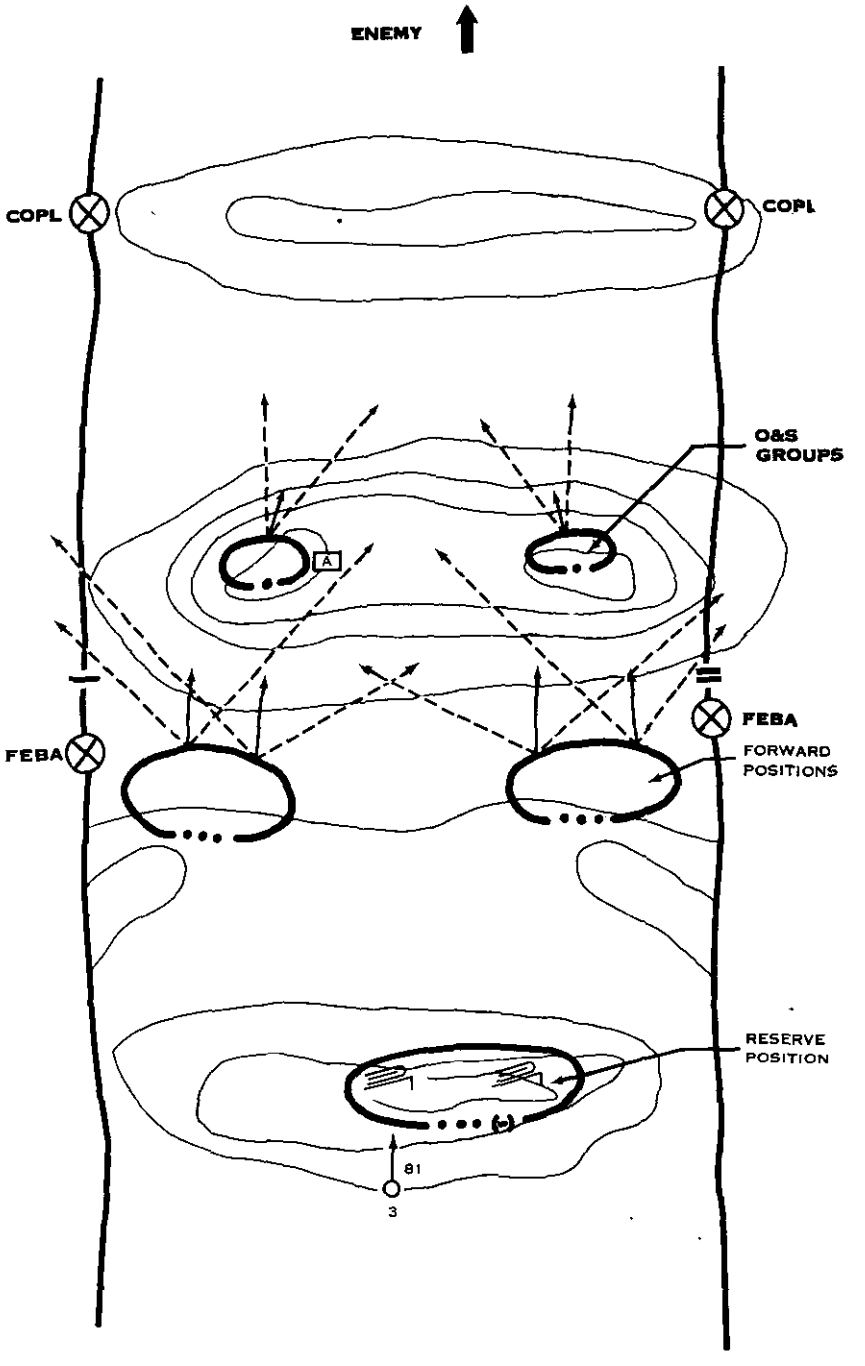


Figure 32. Rifle company in a reverse slope defense (schematic).

d. Positions in the reverse slope defense are organized the same as in the regular defense (pars. 97 through 105). Special considerations are—

(1) Observation and security groups are positioned on or just forward of the topographical crest to give observation over the unit's entire front. These groups may vary in size from two men to a rifle squad reinforced with machineguns, antitank weapons, and tanks, and are usually provided by the reserve platoon.

(2) The forward platoons are located from 200 to 500 meters from the crest of the hill to provide adequate fields of fire. Troops on the reverse slope are located to achieve maximum fire on the crest, the approaches around the crest, and on the forward slope of adjacent terrain features. If within supporting distance, the reserve platoon is placed on the military crest of the next high ground to the rear.

(3) Machineguns and other automatic weapons are located to place the most effective surprise fire on the enemy as he arrives at the crest. Machinegun final protective lines are employed as in a forward slope defense. Sectors of fire should provide maximum coverage of the crest.

(4) Barrages are placed on or short of the crest of the hill to deny that area to the enemy and to assist in breaking up his assault as he crosses over the crest.

(5) The conduct of a reverse slope defense is generally the same as for a forward slope defense. However, the O&S groups forward of the FEBA not only provide early warning of the enemy's advance but attempt to delay, deceive, and disorganize him by fire. They then withdraw into the battle area prior to becoming closely engaged with the enemy.

(6) As the O&S groups withdraw to the FEBA, concentrations are placed on the forward slope and along the crest of the hill to slow and disorganize the advance of the enemy. Direct fire weapons and small arms located along the FEBA hold their fire until the enemy crosses the crest. As the enemy advances over the crest of the hill all available fires are brought on him.

118. Perimeter Defense

(fig. 33)

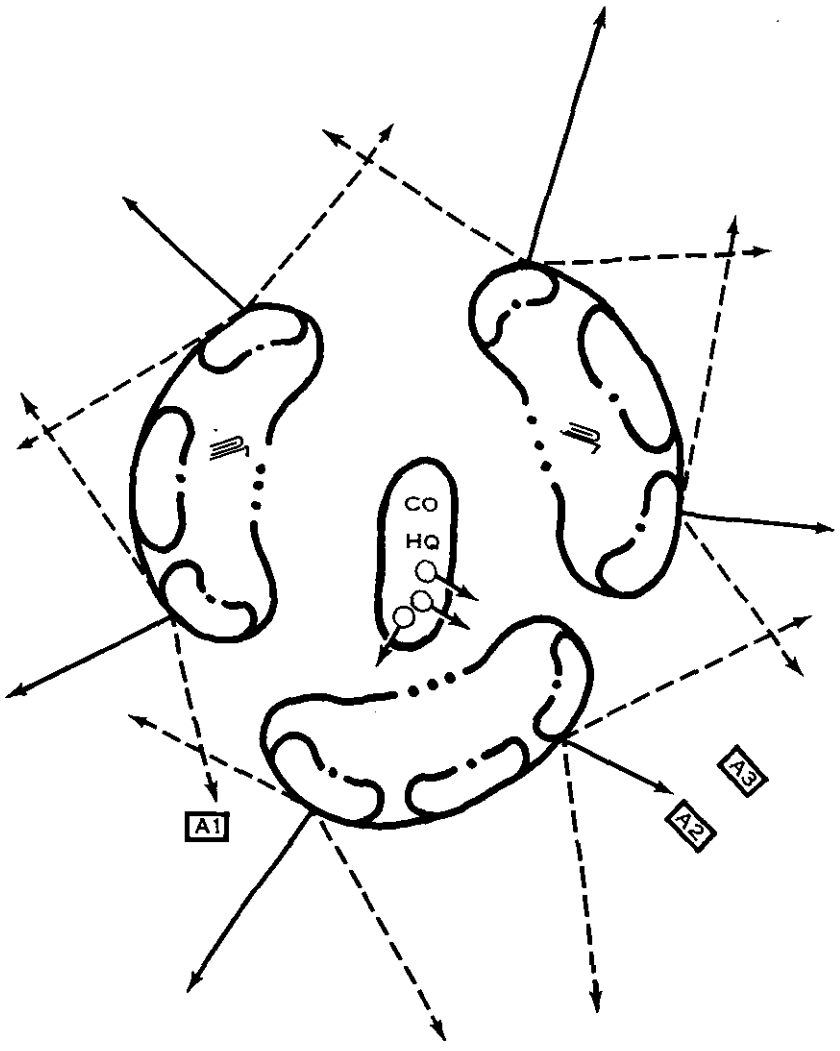
The organization of the platoon defensive position in the perim-

eter defense is the same as that discussed in paragraphs 97 through 105 with these exceptions.

a. The company front is circular rather than linear.

b. Gaps between platoons are generally reduced.

c. The flanks of the platoon will be refused (or bent back) to conform to the company plan of defense.



NOTE:

ENEMY IN ANY OR ALL DIRECTIONS
NOT TO SCALE.

Figure 33. Rifle company in a perimeter defense (schematic).

d. The machinegun will normally be employed singly.

e. A forward platoon in the portion of the perimeter not under attack may be used as a counterattack force to destroy a penetration.

119. Defense of a Riverline

Even though advantages of a river obstacle are exploited to the maximum, friendly forces must be careful not to overestimate the value of the river as an obstacle. The various means available to the enemy for crossing an unfordable river, such as individual flotation devices, boats, armored amphibious vehicles, amphibious tanks, and helicopters must be considered.

a. Methods of Defense. At battalion level there are two basic methods of defending a riverline: (1) to make maximum use of the river as an obstacle by employing maximum combat forces on or in the immediate vicinity of the riverline (fig. 34); (2) or to utilize minimum forces on the riverline with the bulk of combat force held in reserve to strike the enemy when he is astride the river. Although the method of defense is influenced by the mission, and enemy and friendly situation, in most cases the terrain on the near and far banks is the predominant factor. The following factors favor placing maximum combat power on the riverline:

(1) When sufficient forces are available to permit a strong defense of the riverline.

(2) When observation and fields of fire on the near bank are equal to or superior to that on the far bank.

(3) When good defensive terrain exists on the near bank.

(4) When poor trafficability exists on the near bank which would restrict rapid movement of reserves.

b. Disposition of Troops. The rifle platoon will normally defend a riverline as part of the rifle company. Forward platoon defense areas are selected and organized generally as in the area defense regardless of the method of defense used (pars. 97–105).

(1) When maximum combat power is near the river, the forward platoons are positioned to cover the entire river, if practicable, with emphasis placed on the most probable crossing sites. The company commander retains a reserve whenever possible. He may have to select many supplementary reserve positions to provide depth in the areas of likely enemy crossing and for defense against helicopterborne attack.

(2) When minimum combat power is placed on the riverline, the forward platoons may occupy one or more

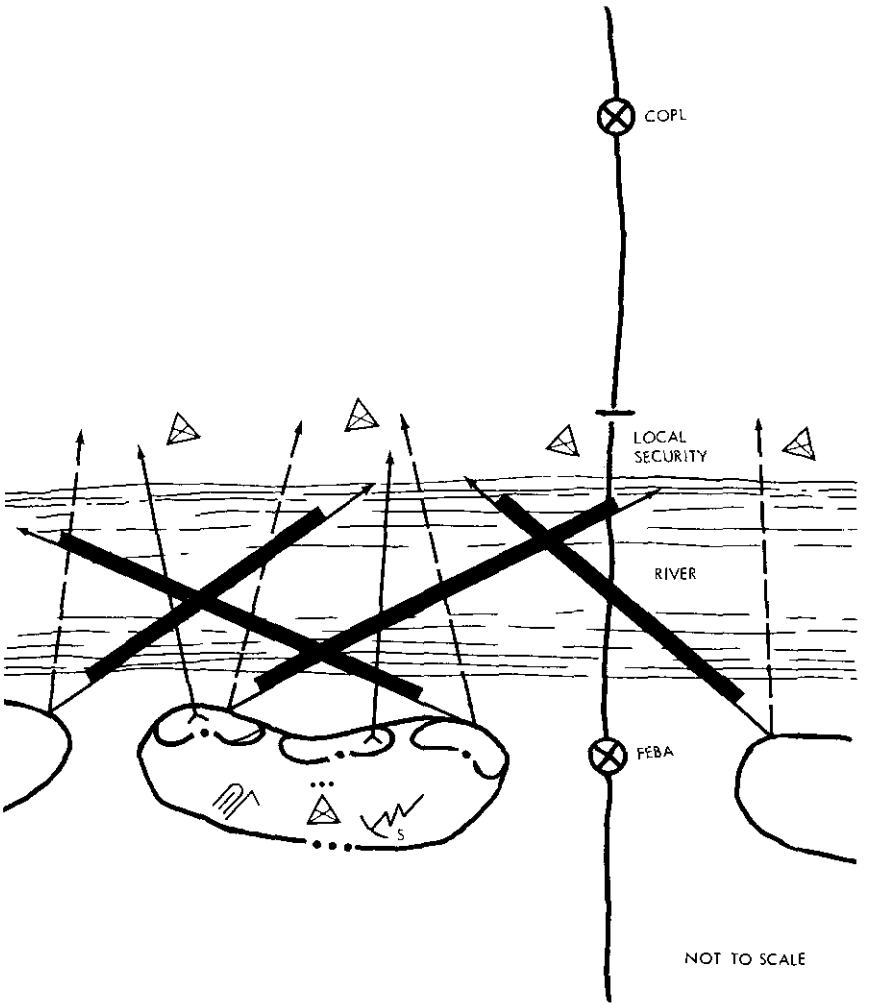


Figure 34. Defense of a riverline (schematic) (maximum forces employed forward).

strong points to cover the dangerous approaches to the river and to fix the enemy by fire so that reserve of the battalion may be committed in a counterattack at the most advantageous time. The company commander will seldom be able to retain a reserve due to the extended frontage for which the forward rifle company will normally be responsible.

c. Fire Support. Organic and attached weapons and supporting fires are employed generally the same as in the area defense with consideration being given to the following additional factors:

(1) Fires are planned on possible assembly areas which are

suitable for massing crossing equipment. Fires are also planned on the approaches to the river and possible crossing sites. VT and mechanical time fires are planned to be used on the enemy while he is crossing the river.

(2) Machineguns are positioned to cover dangerous crossing sites and avenues of approach to them. The terrain along a river usually offers excellent fields of fire and permits grazing enfilade fire to be delivered along the front. Final protective lines may be established to give grazing fire on the river or the far bank.

(3) Antitank squads and attached tanks are positioned to cover avenues of approach to the river and likely crossing sites for amphibious armored vehicles.

d. Security. Security and surveillance measures on the far bank of the river are similar to the area defense except that all security elements must be provided with a means of withdrawal over the obstacle.

(1) The combat outpost will have only amphibious vehicles attached unless there are bridges or fords that can be kept intact for their withdrawal. Plans for withdrawing the combat outpost include both primary and alternate crossing means. Crossing means available may include APC's, helicopters, boats, or other flotation devices. The COP is alert to locate likely nuclear targets and to determine where and when the enemy will attempt to cross.

(2) Local security elements from the forward platoons or reserve units normally patrol the far bank. These patrols are alert for any enemy withdrawal which might indicate their intent to use nuclear weapons. Alternate means of withdrawal should also be planned for local security elements. Circumstances permitting, boats with tow ropes can be concealed on the far bank for rapid withdrawal.

(3) The rifle platoon may be assigned a mission of rear area security. Since the enemy may conduct an airborne assault in conjunction with the river crossing, surveillance means in rear areas are necessary to detect airborne attack. Particular attention must be given to the screening of, and the construction of obstacles on possible landing or drop sites.

e. Obstacles. Every effort must be made to improve the river as a natural obstacle. All bridges, boats, and barges are prepared for demolition. Wire and mines are used at fords and other likely

crossing sites. Plans must also include delaying the destruction of crossing facilities until all security forces are withdrawn.

120. Defense of a Roadblock
(fig. 35)

Roadblocks are a method of restricting the enemy's mobility. They are particularly effective in retrograde operations and against enemy exploitation. The roadblock prevents or hinders enemy movement beyond a point or area along a road or other route of movement. It usually incorporates obstacles covered by fire. The defending force may vary from a few men to a reinforced company. In defensive operations, roadblocks are employed to the front, flanks, and rear of friendly units. In offensive operations, roadblocks may be used to protect the flanks of advancing columns and in the enemy's rear to prevent his withdrawal or reinforcement.

a. Desirable Characteristics of a Roadblock Site.

(1) *Blocks the avenues of approach.* The roadblock should be difficult to bypass.

(2) *Takes advantage of natural obstacles.* Roadblocks can be employed along the side of a steep hill, across streams, marshes, or ravines to take advantage of natural obstacles. Artificial obstacles can then be easily constructed to reinforce, supplement, and tie in with the natural obstacles. This creates an effective obstacle with minimum effort.

(3) *Easily defensible.* The position should provide observation to cover the obstacle and its approach by fire to prevent its being breached. Further, it should provide good fields of fire to the defender and be relatively inacessible to the attacker.

(4) *Gains surprise.* Troops and artificial obstacles should be concealed until it is too late for the enemy to react effectively. Mines, demolitions, and cratering charges are examples of effective, easily concealed obstacles. These also have the advantage of being quickly armed and disarmed as the situation changes. Obstacles may be located around a sharp bend in the road, just over the crest of a hill, or where a road passes through a heavily wooded area to gain surprise.

(5) *Good routes to the rear.* This facilitates resupply and a rapid withdrawal. A slow or disorganized withdrawal of the roadblock force can lead to its destruction by a pursuing enemy.

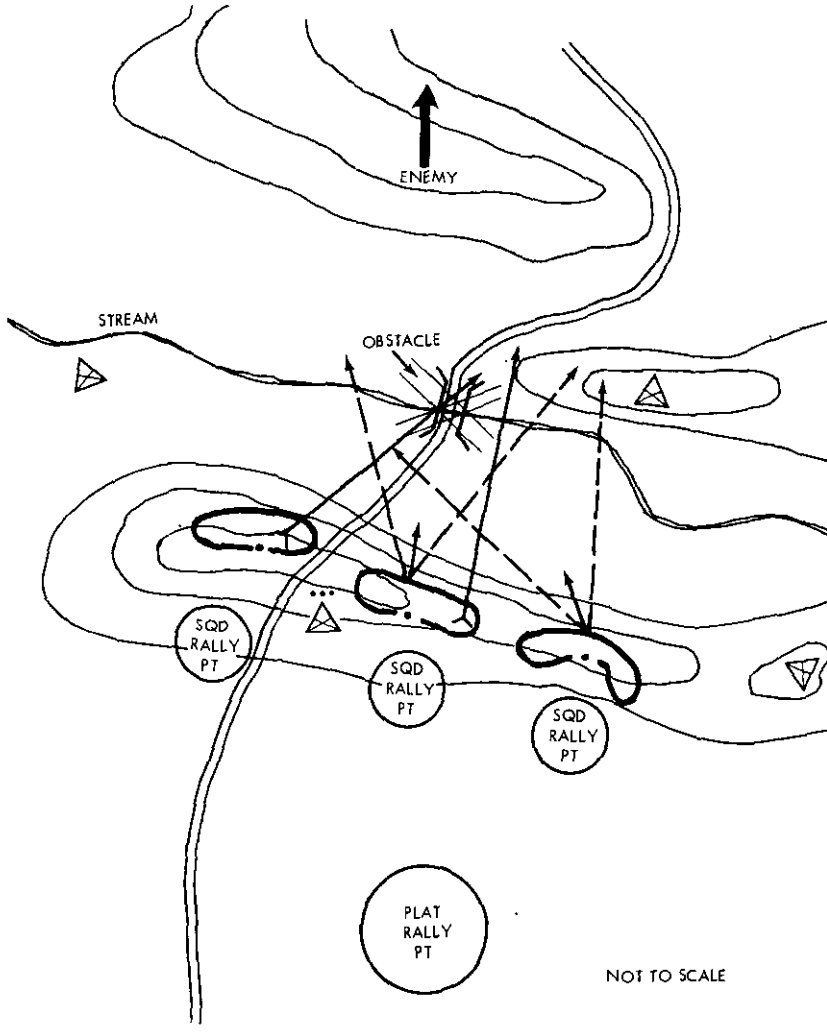


Figure 35. Defense of a roadblock (schematic).

b. Planning the Roadblock. In planning the construction and defense of a roadblock, the normal troop leading steps are accomplished. The roadblock commander—

(1) Makes a terrain analysis from a map and ground reconnaissance.

(2) Estimates material and special equipment needed to construct the obstacles and troop positions.

(3) Makes tentative tactical plans to include:

(*a*) A detailed fire plan and fire control measures, including specific sectors of fire and a signal for opening fire.

(*b*) Troop and weapons locations that can place effective fire on the flanks, on the obstacle and its approaches, and can prevent the enemy from deploying around the obstacle. Troops should not be within hand grenade range of the obstacle and its approaches.

(*c*) A withdrawal plan that includes covered and concealed routes of withdrawal, indirect fires to break contact with the enemy and cover the withdrawal, and plans for the occupation of successive positions to cover movement to the rear. Rallying points are selected on the successive positions to maintain control (ch. 4).

(4) Finalizes his plan, issues orders, and proceeds to organize, prepare, and occupy the position.

c. Preparation. A recommended priority of work is—

(1) *Establish security.* All-round security is established to provide early warning and coordination for the passing of friendly elements.

(2) *Simultaneous construction of the obstacle, clearing fields of fire, and establishment of communications to the rear.* Obstacles which impede the movement of friendly forces are not completed until a specific time or condition has been met. This permits rapid reinforcement or withdrawal of friendly forward forces.

(3) *Simultaneous construction of emplacements and shelters, secondary obstacles, and improvements of existing routes of communication.*

d. Conduct of a Roadblock Defense.

(1) As the enemy approaches the roadblock, the security element warns the roadblock commander. On order, the security is withdrawn to the defensive area along predesignated routes without becoming engaged.

(2) Since surprise is desirable, the defending force does not prematurely disclose its position but waits for the enemy to reach the blocking obstacle before firing. At that time maximum fire is delivered on the obstacle and the approaches.

(3) As the enemy deploys, direct and indirect fires are shifted to likely enemy assembly areas, avenues of approach, and the flanks.

(4) Before the enemy can assault the defending force, permission is requested to withdraw. Secondary obstacles, artillery and mortar fires, and the occupation of succes-

sive positions to the rear are used to cover the unit's withdrawal.

121. Relief in Place
(fig. 36)

A relief in place is the replacement of one unit by another. Reliefs are made to restore or maintain the combat efficiency of the relieved unit or to employ the relieved unit elsewhere. Secrecy and control are essential in preparing and conducting a relief. Since darkness and reduced visibility help to preserve secrecy, reliefs are conducted most frequently at night. A relief is as rapid as control and secrecy permit. During a relief, units are vulnerable to enemy action. To avoid unnecessary concentration of troops and confusion, only portions of the forward platoon are relieved at one time.

a. Planning the Relief.

(1) *Reconnaissance.* Preceding the relief, the incoming platoon leader conducts a daylight reconnaissance of the defensive area. Conditions permitting, the platoon sergeant, all squad leaders, and the leader of any attached element also make a daylight reconnaissance of the new position. On his reconnaissance, the incoming platoon leader normally takes his weapons squad leader and a messenger with radio. This reconnaissance is conducted jointly with the outgoing platoon leader and includes a reconnaissance of the platoon release point, squad release point, squad assembly areas, routes to these areas, and routes to the forward positions. The outgoing platoon leader remains on position with his platoon and selects a representative from his platoon to make a reconnaissance of the new position of the outgoing unit. This enables the outgoing platoon leader to be present if the enemy attacks and allows him to participate in joint reconnaissance with the incoming platoon leader.

(2) *Liaison representatives.* One key NCO is designated as liaison representative by both the incoming and outgoing platoons. The weapons squad leader is usually selected since his weapons are attached to the rifle squads for the relief.

(*a*) *Incoming platoon.* The liaison representative of the incoming platoon accompanies his platoon leader forward on the reconnaissance and remains with the outgoing unit. The incoming liaison representative learns as much as possible about the defense of the area and

changes in the enemy situation. When the platoon comes forward for the relief, the liaison representative informs the platoon leader of any change in the situation.

(*b*) *Outgoing platoon.* The liaison representative from the outgoing platoon remains on the FEBA after the relief has been completed to assist the new platoon leader and provides information regarding the enemy situation, terrain, fire plans, communications, supply,

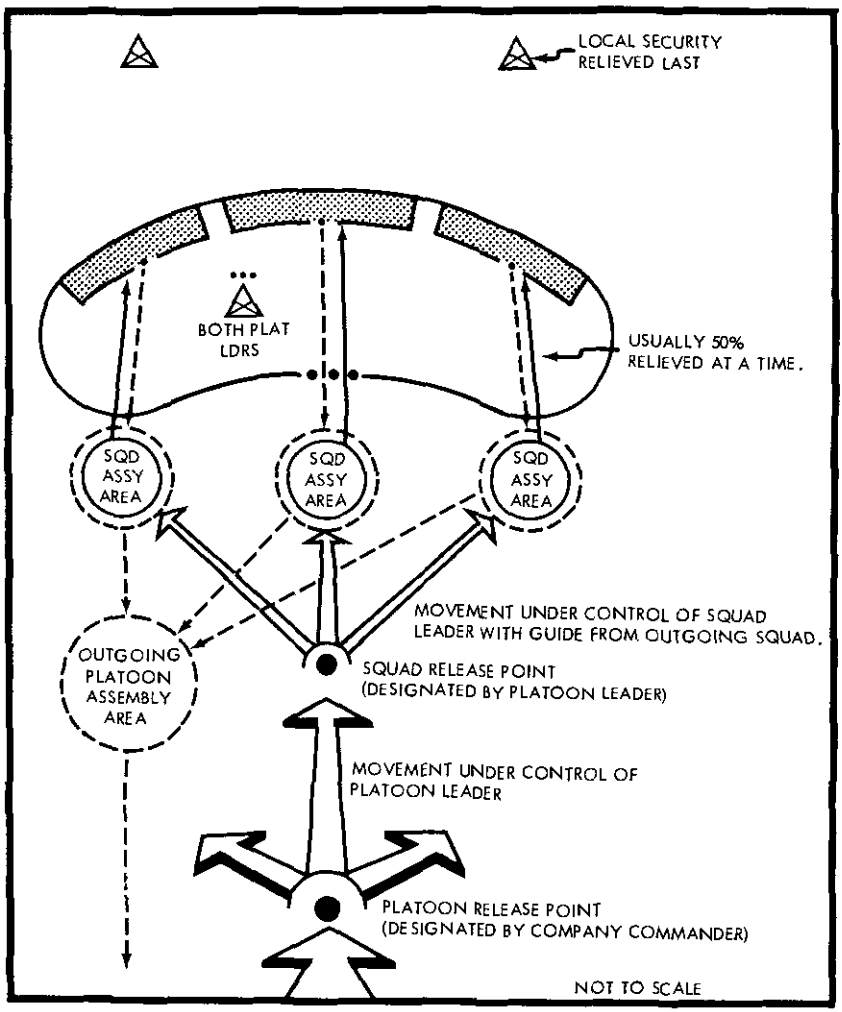


Figure 36. Relief in place (schematic).

security, and other matters which may arise relative to the defense of the position.

(3) *The mutual exchange of crew-served weapons and equipment.* To speed up the relief, to reduce noise in moving supplies and equipment, and to maintain the existing fire plan, it is desirable for incoming and outgoing units to exchange certain crew-served weapons, equipment, and supplies. The company relief order stipulates those items which will actually be exchanged. The weapons exchange is usually limited to those weapons which cannot be easily moved or which are necessary in order to insure the effective delivery of fires. Excess ammunition, range cards, rations, water, fortification materials, wire lines, and communications equipment (except radios) may be left on position by the outgoing unit.

(4) *Attachments.* To simplify control and reduce the number of guides, the incoming and outgoing rifle platoon leaders attach the weapons squad personnel to the rifle squads in whose area they have been or will be employed. Attachments are made for the movement only and, upon completion of the movement, revert to normal control.

(5) *Guides.* The incoming platoon is guided from the platoon release point to the squad release point by a guide from the outgoing company. Guides from the outgoing platoon meet the incoming platoon at the squad release point and lead each incoming squad forward to the squad assembly area. Outgoing squads and platoons are guided to the rear by their own personnel.

(6) *Security.* The most critical period is from the time the relief begins until the new unit is familiar with its position. All possible security measures are employed to insure that the enemy is denied knowledge of the relief. Secrecy is gained by limiting the size and activities of reconnaissance parties, communication security, restricting the movement of vehicles, enforcing light and noise discipline, and by continuing such normal activities as supporting fires, patrols, and local security. The normal local security and patrol action is continued by personnel from the outgoing unit. Members from the incoming unit do not accompany local security elements or patrols forward of the position until completion of the relief. Local security is the last element of the outgoing unit to be relieved.

(7) *Detailed orders.* Delay and confusion during the conduct of the relief can be minimized by timely and detailed orders. The platoon leader's relief order should contain detailed information on the disposition of the new defensive position. This includes the location of squad foxholes and crew-served weapons positions. In addition, specific items such as times for the relief to begin and end, routes, march formations, security requirements, and the actions to be taken in the event of enemy action during the relief are included in the relief order.

b. Conduct of the Relief.

(1) *Incoming units.* At the designated time, the incoming company is guided to the platoon release point by its own guides. At the platoon release point the incoming company commander turns over control of the platoons to the platoon leaders. Guides furnished by the outgoing company lead each incoming platoon on separate routes from the platoon release point to the squad release point. Guides furnished by each outgoing squad will lead the incoming squads (and attachments) over separate routes from the squad release point to the squad assembly areas. At the squad assembly area, the incoming and outgoing squad leaders briefly coordinate the final details of the relief and any changes in the squad defensive position. The incoming and outgoing squad leaders then relieve a few men at a time until the relief is completed. Enough time is allowed for each soldier of the incoming squad to be thoroughly oriented by the man he is relieving. Squad leaders notify their platoon leader when their squads and attached weapons are in position. Platoon leaders keep the company commander informed of the progress of the relief in their platoons.

(2) *Outgoing units.* As each squad is relieved and the incoming squad leader assumes responsibility for the squad area, the platoon leaders are promptly notified and the outgoing squad is moved from the squad assembly area to the platoon assembly area without delay. Once the squads of the outgoing platoon are relieved and the outgoing platoon leader has turned over the responsibility for his area, he joins his platoon in the platoon assembly area and moves the platoon to the company assembly area.

c. *Command During the Relief.*

(1) Platoon leaders are usually together in the CP-OP of the outgoing unit. Squad leaders of both the incoming and outgoing platoons remain together and actively direct the relief conducted by their squads.

(2) During the relief, the outgoing platoon leader is responsible for defense of the platoon area. The execution of a relief takes place under the direction of the commander of the unit being relieved. The incoming platoon leader assumes responsibility for the platoon area when all of his platoon is in position and he has established complete control; or under conditions specified in the company commander's order. This is also true at squad level. When an attack occurs before the incoming leader has assumed responsibility for the area, the outgoing leader conducts the defense with those elements of both the old and new that are in position. When ready to exchange responsibility, the incoming and outgoing leaders notify their respective company commanders and receive verification of the exchange of responsibility.

122. Defense Against Tanks

The infantryman strives to destroy enemy armor or canalize it into areas where it will be vulnerable to antitank fires. The infantry protects itself by digging in, constructing antitank and antipersonnel obstacles which are covered by fire, employing antitank weapons, and by directing artillery and mortar fires on advancing tanks. Platoon antitank weapons, squad antitank weapons, and attached antitank weapons are employed to cover avenues of armor approach and to protect the infantry from enemy armor. Antitank weapons are dug in for protection against enemy fires. Tanks are employed in hull defilade (or dug in) and assigned alternate and supplementary positions. Range cards are prepared for all antitank weapons to insure accurate fire during periods of reduced visibility.

a. *Defensive Position Overrun by Tanks.*

(1) Every effort is made to stop tanks by antitank obstacles and destroy them by antitank weapons. Small arms and indirect fires cover the obstacles to prevent the enemy from breaching them.

(2) When enemy armor penetrates the position, all individual riflemen fire on the tanks and kill the accompanying infantry as they pass over or near their positions. The

antitank means organic to, or provided for the platoon, are used to destroy the armor.

(3) In defending against a tank attack, the entrenched infantry prevents any dismounted enemy infantry from breaching the obstacles and assaulting with the tanks. This is done by small arms and indirect fires covering the obstacles and the approaches to them. If the enemy succeeds in riding over the FEBA, the enemy infantry is destroyed as he dismounts by friendly indirect fires called on position and automatic weapons firing at the carriers and carrier exits. As enemy tanks and carriers pass over or by foxholes, riflemen quickly attempt to destroy them by using available tank-killing devices. Once the enemy's armor has passed over the position, the platoon continues to defend the position.

b. Tank-Hunter Teams.

(1) Under all situations, and particularly in rough or wooded terrain, cities and villages, or at night, tank-hunter teams are formed to destroy enemy tanks. These teams may be used either within or forward of the battle area and are particularly effective in enemy rear areas.

(2) The success of the tank-hunter teams depends on surprise and taking advantage of the tank's inherent weaknesses. Surprise can be gained by ambush, maximum use of concealment, and stealth. The action itself should last for only a matter of seconds; the tank-hunter team must then hide or be destroyed. For this reason, the team is small and must possess a maximum firepower capability.

(3) The tank-hunter team consists of a team leader, a tank destroyer element, and an automatic weapons element. The tank destroyer element destroys the tank by antitank weapons or by closing in on the tank's rear or blind side and destroying or crippling it with a tank-killing device. The automatic weapons element provides covering fire and support for the tank destroyer element by surprising and killing nearby enemy infantry and dismounted or exposed crewmen (fig. 37).

(4) For missions in the enemy's rear, the team leader should be provided with communications. This enables the team to combine many of the functions of patrolling. Radio communications can be used for calling and adjusting artillery fires to cover the withdrawal of the teams, on targets of opportunity, and for reporting enemy information, or requesting helicopter resupply and evacuation.

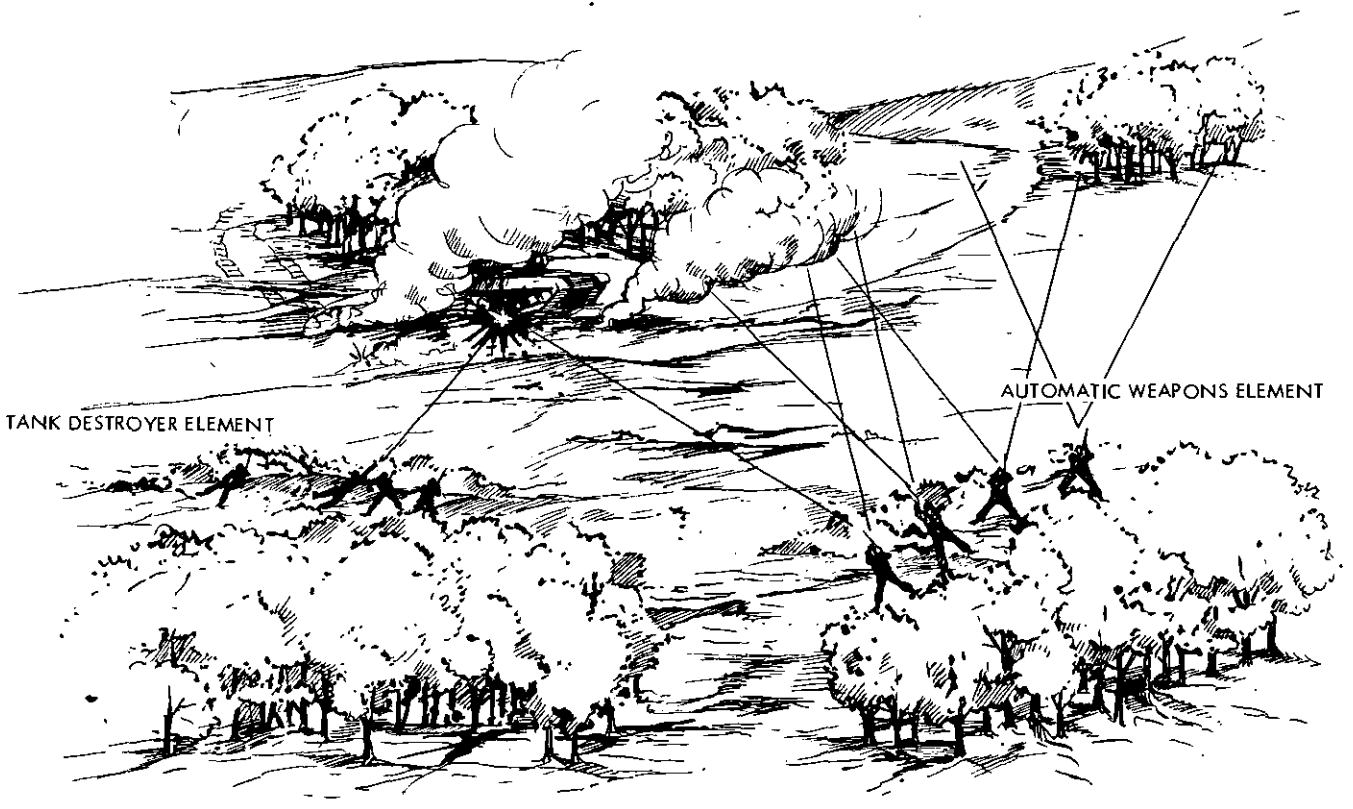


Figure 37. Tank-hunter team.

Section VI. MECHANIZED RIFLE PLATOON IN DEFENSE

123. General

The mechanized platoon is employed in the defense in much the same manner as the dismounted platoon. The major differences in employment are—

a. The platoon APC's must be positioned so as to be available.

b. The firepower of the mounted machinegun may be employed provided the vehicle is not exposed unnecessarily to antitank fire.

c. Maintenance must be performed on the APC's continuously.

d. The additional machinegun carried in each rifle squad APC is employed within the squad area. Riflemen in the squad man the weapon. The machineguns are employed the same as the machineguns in the weapons squad.

e. Because of its built-in mobility, the mechanized platoon may be shifted rapidly and frequently to take advantage of changing situations. The mechanized platoon is capable of shifting rapidly from the defense to the offense or to retrograde.

f. In the defense, tank platoons are attached to the mechanized infantry company and the mechanized infantry platoon attached to the tank company. The leader must be entirely familiar with FM 7–11 for a full understanding of company tactics.

124. Employment of Armored Personnel Carriers in Defense

The APC's may be positioned on the reverse slope of the position to provide security to the flanks and rear; or they may be held in covered and concealed positions in the rear of the platoon until time to move. They may also support by fire from hull defilade positions; however, the primary purpose of the APC's is to provide mobility and they should not be placed in firing positions which may expose them to antitank fire or air attack.

a. When APC's are used to protect the flanks and rear, the driver mans the turret's machinegun from a position to the rear of his squad, taking maximum advantage of cover and concealment.

b. When APC's are placed in a covered and concealed area, they should be positioned to provide all-round security and should be close to the rear of the platoon. Normally, the platoon will not provide additional security for the APC's. They should be camouflaged, and track marks which may disclose their position should be concealed.

c. When supporting by fire, the APC's should be dug in so that only the machinegun is visible. Sandbags can be used to protect

the APC provided they do not hinder rapid movement. Maximum use is made of available camouflage. The platoon leader will assign alternate and supplementary positions.

Section VII. MECHANIZED RIFLE PLATOON IN THE MOBILE DEFENSE

125. General

The mechanized rifle platoon in the mobile defense will operate as a part of the company (FM 7–11). The company may participate as part of a battalion in the security forces, forward defense forces (fixing forces), or the reserve (striking force).

126. Mechanized Rifle Platoon as Part of Security Force

a. The covering force is the division security echelon in the mobile defense. Its mission is to detect the approach of the enemy and give forward defense forces time to prepare the main battle area. Within its capability it delays and disorganizes the enemy and deceives him as to the location of the main force. The covering force seeks to destroy the enemy employing all available fires in conjunction with offensive maneuver.

b. The platoon as part of the covering force uses basically the delaying action techniques discussed in chapter 4.

127. Conduct of the Mechanized Platoon in Fixing Force Operations

a. Mission of the mechanized platoon as part of the company may include the conduct of counterattacks, defense of key terrain, and delay of the enemy.

b. Aggressive reconnaissance is conducted by platoons as part of the company overall reconnaissance plan to determine the strength, composition, direction, and time of the enemy attack, together with all pertinent information of the unit area of operation. Security is of vital importance; platoons must not be surprised or prematurely engaged. The platoon and squad leaders must take positive action to insure that communication is maintained and that their units are prepared at all times to move rapidly to support the company commander's plan of defense.

c. Depending upon the advance of the enemy, particularly when contact becomes imminent, the mechanized platoon leader insures that his platoon is highly mobile and is prepared to immediately execute the company commander's plan of action.

d. If the scheme of defense requires a counterattack, the platoon conducts it in the same manner as is discussed in paragraphs 56

through 66 and in FM 7–11. The necessary coordination is effected, the platoon leader announces his plan, and the platoon executes the counterattack as part of the company.

e. If the plan of defense requires the occupation of one or more blocking positions or strongpoints, the platoon leader executes this plan by moving his platoon to previously prepared positions.

f. When defending key terrain and enemy action forces the security posts in front of the platoon through the FEBA, the platoon leader conducts his fires and requests fires from the company commander as discussed in paragraph 104.

g. When the platoon mission is to delay the enemy as part of the company the platoon leader may upon the withdrawal of the observation posts engage the enemy with fires from the machineguns on his APC's. Local security for the platoon is withdrawn and artillery and mortar fires are adjusted as the enemy advances. The platoon leader will not request final protective fires unless they are necessary for his extrication. The company commander must be kept informed of the situation to insure that the platoon does not become decisively engaged with the enemy. The platoon leader when ordered by the company commander executes a rapid withdrawal or continuous delay to a preselected position.

128. Mechanized Platoon Positions in Fixing Force Operations

a. The platoon when operating as part of the fixing force may be assigned a specific terrain feature to organize or a portion of a terrain feature organized by the company.

b. In some instances, due to the nature of the terrain and width of sector, platoon positions may be out of immediate supporting range of other elements of the company. To be considered as mutually supporting by fire, each platoon must be able to give some assistance by the fire of its weapons to an adjacent platoon which is under attack. This does not mean that it must fire across the entire front of the adjacent platoon. In order that the rifle platoons within a company sector can be mutually supporting by fire, they cannot be separated by more than the effective range of the platoon organic weapons. This distance may be based on the ability of the machineguns to employ grazing fire into the area of an adjacent platoon.

c. All platoons will be organized for all-round defense.

CHAPTER 4

RETROGRADE OPERATIONS

Section I. GENERAL

129. General

This chapter provides the necessary guidance for the rifle squad and platoon leaders in conducting retrograde operations. It is applicable to the rifle platoon of the infantry, airborne infantry, airborne infantry, and mechanized infantry.

a. The rifle platoon normally conducts retrograde operations as a part of the company, requiring the platoon leader to have an understanding of company retrograde tactics as discussed in FM 7–11.

b. The mechanized infantry platoon when dismounted will function much the same as any other infantry platoon. The major differences in the employment of the mechanized infantry platoon are outlined in paragraphs 145 through 148.

c. A retrograde operation is any organized movement of a unit to the rear or away from the enemy. It may be forced by the enemy or made voluntarily.

d. A retrograde operation may be classified as a *withdrawal*, a *delaying action*, or a *retirement*.

e. The platoon usually executes retrograde operations as a part of the company and receives permission from the company commander prior to executing any such operation.

f. Movement during retrograde operations may be accomplished by foot, ground vehicle, aircraft, or a combination of these means. APC's will be utilized frequently in executing retrograde operations due to their speed, mobility, and armored protection. For a discussion of withdrawal by air, see chapter 5.

g. The enemy may be expected to follow up any retrograde operation relentlessly by air and ground action, and to include the use of conventional and nuclear fires. The platoon executes retrograde operations with secrecy and deception as the situation will allow, taking advantage of cover and concealment, and providing security to the front, flanks, and rear at all times.

h. During retrograde operations, leaders must keep the morale of their men high. Members of the platoon will be informed of the reason for the action and the part each soldier will play in the accomplishment of the mission. False rumors and exaggerated reports are counteracted by keeping the men informed. The presence of leaders with the troops actually engaged with the enemy, providing for the welfare of the platoon, forceful leadership, strict discipline, control, and prior planning will assist in maintaining good morale and preventing panic.

i. Detailed reconnaissance is accomplished to the rear by as many soldiers as the situation permits. Each member of the squad must reconnoiter his route to the squad assembly area or initial rallying point. All leaders should reconnoiter the route to the assembly area of the next higher unit. Reconnaissance parties are sent to the rear to organize the position and to guide the platoon into position in the rearward location. Guides are posted when unfamiliar routes are used.

j. Detailed plans, to include alternate plans, are made by all units. Clear, complete, and concise orders are issued as rapidly as possible. Fragmentary orders are issued to insure concurrent action at all levels.

k. The use of natural and artificial obstacles to the front, flanks, and rear will assist in the conduct of retrograde operations. Extensive use must be made of supporting weapons, with leaders at all echelons being capable of calling for and adjusting these fires.

l. Every effort will be made to prevent wounded men from being captured during the conduct of retrograde operations.

m. The platoon leader insures that there is sufficient ammunition within his platoon to accomplish the mission, keeping in mind that when the retrograde movement starts, all supplies (except medical) which cannot be carried to the rear must be destroyed.

130. Communications

All available means of communication are used to maintain control and to provide flexibility. Although radio and wire are the primary means of communication, alternate means are established. These may include messengers, visual and sound signals, and radios of tanks and forward observers.

131. Withdrawal Through Friendly Units

a. During the conduct of retrograde operations, the platoon will be required to withdraw through or around friendly units. This action should be coordinated in advance.

b. When effecting coordination, the following must be considered:

(1) Mutual recognition: signals to be used by the moving unit and the reply to be given.

(2) Routes around or through the friendly unit.

(3) Points of withdrawal through the friendly unit.

c. When withdrawal through or around a friendly unit has been accomplished, that unit must be notified so that it has freedom of fire to its front.

132. Retirement

A retirement is an operation in which a unit withdraws without enemy pressure. When a withdrawal precedes a retirement, the retirement begins when contact with the enemy has been broken and march columns formed. See chapter 6 for a discussion of tactical movements.

133. Withdrawal

a. A withdrawal is an operation by which all or part of a deployed force disengages from the enemy in order to position itself to initiate some other action. It may be followed by a retirement, a delaying action, defense of another position, or an attack in a different sector.

b. Withdrawals may be made voluntarily or be forced by the enemy. Whenever possible, withdrawals are made voluntarily with as much secrecy and deception as possible.

c. There are two techniques of executing withdrawals, the *night withdrawal technique* and the *daylight withdrawal technique.*

(1) The *night withdrawal* technique is used at night, during periods of reduced visibility, or in the absence of definite enemy pressure. When using night withdrawal techniques, a portion of the force is left on position to simulate normal activities, while the remainder of the force withdraws to the rear. This technique affords the most secrecy and deception.

(2) A *daylight withdrawal* technique is used when a unit is forced to execute a withdrawal by enemy action. Units disengage from the enemy by fighting their way to the rear, passing through or around forces positioned to the rear which cover the withdrawal of forward units.

d. Should enemy pressure force a withdrawal at night, daylight withdrawal techniques are used.

e. When the platoon participates in a withdrawal from action as a part of a company, the technique of withdrawal to be used will be directed.

Section II. NIGHT WITHDRAWAL TECHNIQUES
(fig. 38)

134. General

a. A night withdrawal is executed with secrecy and deception. All units move to the rear at the same time with the exception of detachments left in contact, which protect the withdrawal of the main body by deception and resistance. Night withdrawal techniques may be used during daylight under conditions of poor visibility and the lack of definite enemy pressure.

b. The platoon participates in night withdrawals as part of the company. The company commander's order will include the following:

(1) *Time of withdrawal.* In order to insure coordinated action by all units, a time is given for the withdrawal to start. The main body of the platoon will actually start to move from individual positions at this time.

(2) *Assembly areas.* The company is assigned an assembly area to the rear of the reserve platoon. The company commander will assign the platoon an assembly area as close to the rear of the platoon position as possible.

(3) *Routes.* Routes are designated from platoon assembly areas to the company assembly area and then to the next position.

(4) *Attachments of supporting weapons to supported unit.* Supporting weapons are attached to the rifle platoon in whose area they are located in order to provide for the withdrawal of these weapons in accordance with the plan and to insure protection of these weapons during the conduct of the withdrawal.

(5) *Action to be taken in event of enemy attack.* Plans are made to counteract enemy interference with the withdrawal. These plans may include alternate routes and assembly areas, a platoon occupying a blocking position to protect the withdrawal of the remainder of the main body, a counterattack to extricate a unit which has been cut off, or the utilization of daylight withdrawal techniques (pars. 138–141).

(6) *Detachments left in contact.* The strength, composition,

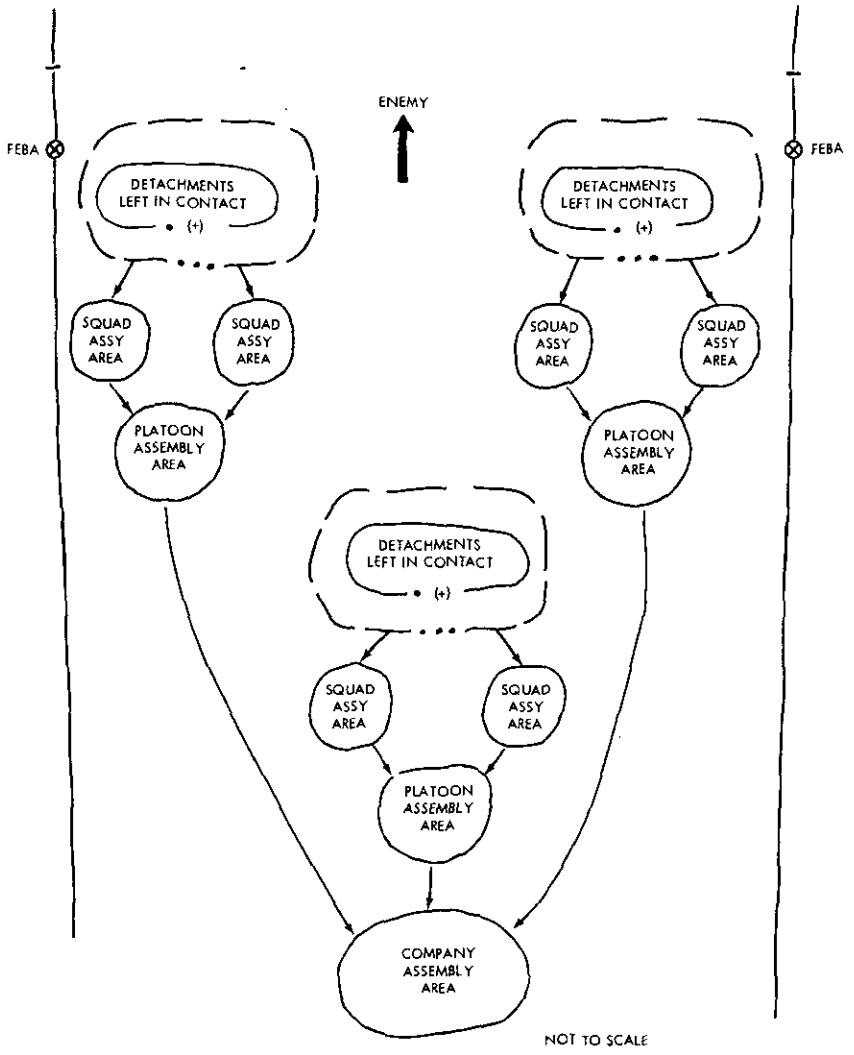


Figure 38. Night withdrawal techniques (schematic).

and instructions pertaining to the actions and withdrawal of the detachments left in contact.

(7) *Mission following withdrawal.* The mission to be accomplished following the withdrawal is given in as much detail as possible to allow prior planning.

c. Based on the company commander's order, the platoon leader will include the following in the platoon order:

(1) *Time of withdrawal.* The time soldiers start moving from their positions to the squad assembly areas.

(2) *Squad assembly areas.* Each squad is assigned an assembly area located to the rear of its positions.

(3) *Routes.* Each squad is assigned a route from its assembly area to the platoon assembly area.

(4) *Attachments of supporting weapons to supported unit.* To insure control and protection during the conduct of the withdrawal, elements of the weapons squad which are located in a rifle squad area are attached to that rifle squad when the withdrawal starts. Normally, squad and section-sized units attached to the platoon are not further attached to the rifle squads.

(5) *Detachments left in contact.* The strength, composition, and the commander are announced. Instructions concerning the mission and the plan for withdrawal of this force are given in detail.

(6) *Mission.* The mission to be accomplished following the withdrawal.

135. Planning and Preparation

a. After receiving the company commander's order, the platoon leader starts his planning (pars. 9 and 10) and issues a warning order immediately. Maximum use is made of available daylight for reconnaissance. The platoon leader makes a reconnaissance of the platoon assembly area and the route to the company assembly area. He selects squad assembly areas and routes from these assembly areas to the platoon assembly area. Squad leaders reconnoiter the route from their squad position to the squad assembly area and the route to the platoon assembly area. Soldiers within the squad reconnoiter the routes from their positions to the squad assembly area.

b. The reconnaissance of a new position to the rear will be conducted by a reconnaissance party designated by the company commander. The party, under control of the weapons platoon leader, will depart for the new position as soon as possible after receipt of the order. At least one soldier of the rifle platoon, usually the platoon sergeant, will accompany this reconnaissance party. The company reconnaissance representative (weapons platoon leader) will assign the platoon mission to the platoon representative at the new position. The platoon representative will select squad and crew-served weapons positions, the location of the platoon CP-OP, and local security positions. He will then meet the platoon and the detachments left in contact when they arrive at a designated release point and guide them into the new position.

136. Detachments Left in Contact

a. The mission of the detachments left in contact is to protect the withdrawal of the main body by deception and resistance. The composition of the detachments left in contact is designated by the company commander. Normally one rifle squad and one-half of the crew-served weapons, under command of the rifle squad leader, are left as platoon detachments left in contact. The rifle squad selected will normally be the center squad, so lateral movement will be reduced. The crew-served weapons selected are those with the best fields of fire.

b. When the withdrawal starts, detachments left in contact are redisposed to block the most dangerous approaches leading into the platoon position. Machineguns are assigned sectors of fire to accomplish their mission. The company executive officer is normally designated commander of the company detachments left in contact; the squad leader commanding the platoon detachments left in contact will receive his instructions from the commander of the company detachments left in contact when the withdrawal begins.

c. If there is a definite enemy armor threat or if deception would be jeopardized by the sound of moving tanks and other vehicular mounted antitank weapons, these may be left with the detachments left in contact.

d. When APC's are available, they are normally attached to the detachments left in contact. They should be positioned well forward so the detachments left in contact may mount and move rapidly to the rear when their mission has been accomplished.

e. The commander of the platoon detachments left in contact will have wire, radio, and messenger communication with the commander of the company detachments left in contact. Wire, radio, sound, and visual signals provide communication to control the actions of the detachments left in contact. Existing communication facilities are maintained in the old position. The minimum of communications personnel remain in the old position to operate the communication system for the detachment left in contact. If at all possible, unused wire lines are recovered or sections removed to prevent their use by the enemy. Deceptive measures include using dummy radio stations and maintaining normal radio activity in the old position.

f. Infrared, radar, binoculars, and other night surveillance devices will assist the detachments left in contact in detecting enemy movement and adjusting direct and indirect fires on the enemy.

g. Detachments left in contact from the reserve platoon of a forward company may be used to patrol in the rear, block dan-

gerous approaches into the flanks, patrol to the front, or remain in position to add depth to the position.

137. Conduct of the Night Withdrawal

a. Rearward movement of all elements of the rifle company, less detachments left in contact, begins at the designated time. Soldiers move to squad assembly areas, squads move to platoon assembly areas, platoons move to company assembly areas, and companies move to battalion assembly areas or control points.

b. Column formations, which aid control, are used at all levels. The company commander will usually send the platoons immediately to the rear as they reach the company assembly area. A platoon must have security to the front, flanks, and rear during all phases of this movement.

c. When transportation is available, the platoon leader will have his loading plan prepared in advance and issued to his subordinate leaders. When possible, a soldier from the platoon should locate the vehicles which the platoon will use and guide the platoon to these vehicles without delay. Care should be exercised to reduce or eliminate unnecessary noise, use of lights, or delay in loading vehicles and moving out. Plans should be made for protection to front, flanks, and rear while mounted on the vehicles and for action to be taken when forced to dismount by enemy action. When vehicles in column are halted, the platoon leader should move forward along the column to determine the cause of the delay and eliminate the cause so movement to the rear is not delayed.

d. When the withdrawal of the main body starts, the detachments left in contact move to predetermined positions and protect the withdrawal of the main body by deception and resistance. Maximum use is made of all available direct and indirect fires. Should the enemy force the platoon detachments left in contact off their position, they must fight their way to the rear and delay the enemy as much as possible in order to protect the rearward movement of the main body. When the detachments left in contact have accomplished their mission, they will be ordered to withdraw to the rear. Platoon detachments left in contact withdraw to the platoon assembly area and then to company assembly area. This movement is executed rapidly and with the use of APC's when available. The use of indirect fires and smoke will greatly assist in the withdrawal of the detachments left in contact. Every effort is made to move the detachments left in contact to the rear in sufficient time so they close on the new position prior to daylight.

e. Both the main body and the detachments left in contact are guided to the rear from the company assembly area to a platoon

release point. The platoon reconnaissance representative meets both the main body of the platoon and the detachments left in contact at a designated release point and leads them into position. There must be no delay in moving through the release points. The platoon reconnaissance representative will have a preliminary fire also prepared for the new position and will inform the platoon leader and his subordinates of the plan in as much detail as possible. The platoon leader issues a complete order and prepares a fire plan as rapidly as possible.

Section III. DAYLIGHT WITHDRAWAL TECHNIQUES
(fig. 39)

138. General

a. A daylight withdrawal is executed by forward units fighting their rear and with units positioned to the rear covering the withdrawal of the forward units. The degree of enemy pressure dictates the method of withdrawal (par. 141). A daylight withdrawal is not desirable but may be forced by enemy action.

b. The platoon normally participates in daylight withdrawal as part of the company. The company commander's order will include all or part of the following:

(1) The time the withdrawal is to start. Frequently this time will not be known in advance and the withdrawal will start on order.

(2) The sequence of withdrawal for the platoons. If the situation and terrain dictate, one or more forward platoons remain on position for a period of time in order to protect the withdrawal of other forward platoons. Normally, the least engaged platoons will be withdrawn first.

(3) The zone of withdrawal for each platoon. The platoon is usually assigned a zone of withdrawal which extends to the rear as far as it is anticipated the platoon will be deployed. In the event it is necessary for the platoon to fight its way to the rear, the action will be conducted within this zone.

(4) The route of withdrawal for each platoon. The platoon is assigned, within a zone, a route of withdrawal from the platoon assembly area to the company assembly area.

(5) The phase lines used to control the action. These are lines running perpendicular to the direction of movement and are terrain features easily identifiable on the ground.

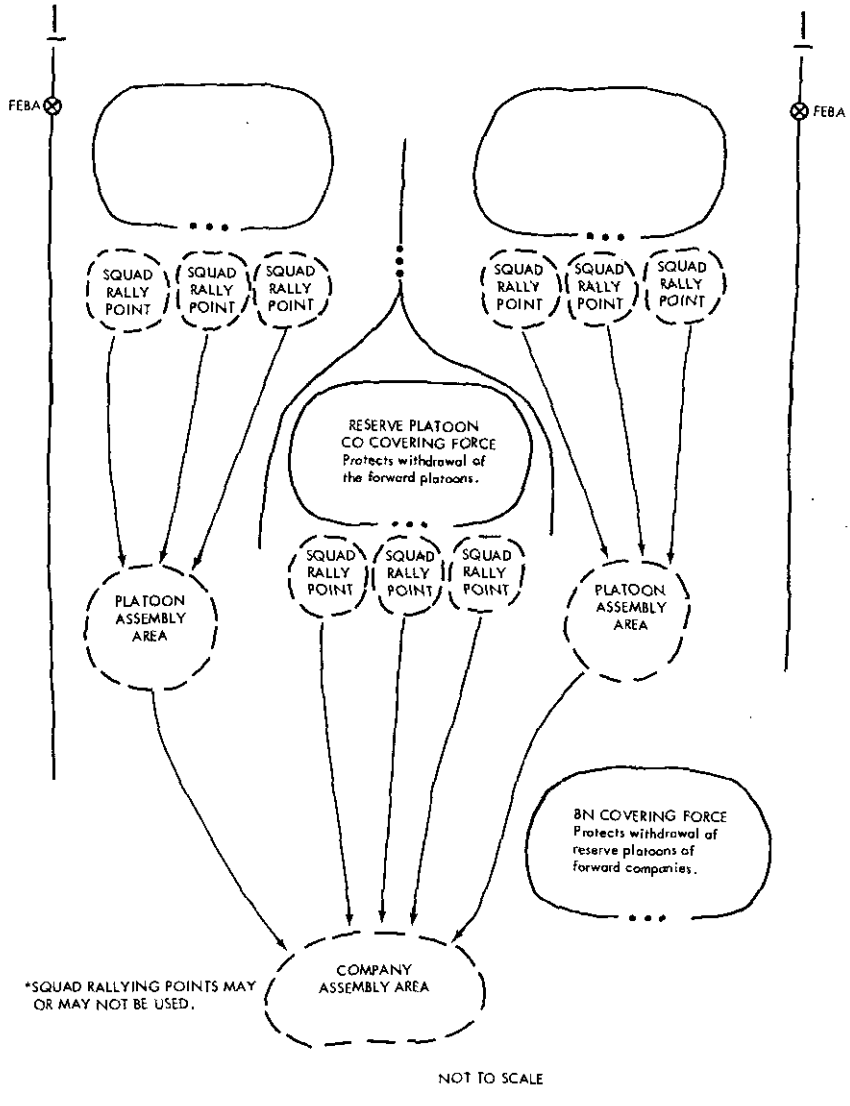


Figure 39. Daylight withdrawal techniques (schematic).

(6) The location of assembly areas. The company assembly area is usually in the rear of the battalion covering force. The company commander selects platoon assembly areas in the rear of the company covering force.

(7) The attachments of supporting weapons to the supported units. Normally supporting weapons, such as antitank weapons, located in a platoon area are attached to that platoon when the withdrawal starts.

(8) Instructions for the positioning and action of the company covering force.

(9) The mission to be accomplished following the withdrawal.

c. Based on the company commander's order, the platoon order will include the following:

(1) The time the platoon will start its movement to the rear. Frequently this time will not be known in advance and the action will start on order.

(2) The method of withdrawal the platoon will use (par. 141).

(3) Rallying points. Squad rallying points are selected by the platoon leader immediately to the rear of the squad position. Here the squad leader regains control of his squad and if necessary prepares to continue fighting from this position. The minimum amount of time is spent at these rallying points. Additional squad and platoon rallying points are selected along the squad and platoon routes of withdrawal.

(4) The location of the platoon assembly area designated by the company commander. At this location the platoon will have broken contact with the enemy and moves rapidly to the rear.

(5) The routes of withdrawal for the squads. The platoon leader selects routes from the squad position to the platoon assembly area. These routes are within the platoon zone of withdrawal.

(6) The attachments of supporting weapons to the rifle squads. Elements of the weapons squad located in the rifle squad position are attached to the rifle squad when the withdrawal starts to insure coordination and control. Units attached to the platoon are not normally further attached to rifle squads.

(7) The mission to be accomplished following the withdrawal.

139. Planning and Preparation

a. Planning is as detailed as time permits. Thorough reconnaissance by all leaders of routes of withdrawal, zones of withdrawal, subsequent positions, rallying points, and assembly areas is desirable. Time will normally permit only limited reconnaissance and maximum use must be made of reconnaissance parties. The platoon leader issues a warning order as soon as possible to

permit concurrent planning and reconnaissance by his subordinate leaders. Fragmentary orders are issued as plans are made.

b. The platoon leader will designate the method of withdrawal (par. 141). Squad routes of withdrawal, initial squad rallying points, platoon rallying points, the formation to be used when contact with the enemy has been broken, and alternate plans to insure flexibility are all covered by the platoon leader in his order.

c. Tanks may protect the rearward movement of the platoon. They may withdraw with the platoon or move to a position to the rear to support the withdrawal.

d. When APC's are available, they are positioned as far forward as possible, in a hull defilade position, so they are able to support the withdrawal from position by fire and then move rapidly to the rear when the platoon has mounted.

140. Covering Force

a. The reserve platoon acts as the company covering force. It remains in position until the forward platoons have withdrawn to its rear. The covering force protects the withdrawal of forward platoons by fire. Supporting weapons, such as tanks, are normally released from attachment to the forward platoons when they withdraw in the rear of the covering force and these weapons are attached to the covering force.

b. The covering force may remain in its prepared position or move to a different position to afford protection for the withdrawal of the forward platoons. When the forward platoons have moved far enough to the rear, the company commander will order the covering force to withdraw to the rear of the battalion covering force.

141. Conduct of Daylight Withdrawal

a. Depending upon the situation, the company commander may order the simultaneous withdrawal of all forward platoons or he may order the least heavily engaged platoons to withdraw first. The platoon starts the withdrawal on order. Normally the least heavily engaged squads and supporting weapons are withdrawn first. Direct and indirect fires, to include smoke, assist in the withdrawal.

b. When enemy pressure is heavy, the platoon must withdraw from position by fighting its way to the rear. Control during this phase is extremely important. The platoon maneuvers to the rear by thinning the lines. Three methods the platoon may use in withdrawing from position or in maneuvering to the rear are listed below. These methods are given as guides only. The method

used will vary with the situation and terrain. In each of these methods the platoon sergeant withdraws first to coordinate the actions of individuals and elements as they withdraw, while the platoon leader remains in position until all elements have withdrawn.

(1) *Withdrawal by thinning the lines, automatic weapons withdrawing last.* When this method is used, men armed with rifles are withdrawn first. The squad automatic weapons are then withdrawn, followed by the machineguns. The squad leader withdraws with the last element. APC's, when used, should be positioned so the mounted machinegun can be used and loading facilitated. Depending on the enemy armor capabilities, antitank weapons may be withdrawn at any time. As one element is withdrawn, the elements remaining on position increase their rate of fire to preclude the enemy overrunning the position. Squads withdraw to the squad rallying point or to the next position to the rear. This method provides maximum firepower over the entire platoon position during the conduct of the withdrawal from position.

(2) *Withdrawal by squad maneuver.* In using this method, one squad, with crew-served weapons attached, is left on position as a rear guard. The rest of the platoon is withdrawn to the rear. The rear guard is withdrawn when the remainder of the platoon has reached the next terrain feature to the rear, or is in position to cover the withdrawal of the rear guard. If the enemy pursues closely, it may be necessary for the platoon to fight its way to the rear leapfrogging squads and crew-served weapons. APC's may be used by all elements of the platoon. If the number of APC's is limited, the squad acting as rear guard should have priority of use. When tanks are available, they should be left with the rear guard or in a position to protect the withdrawal of the rear guard. The squad left as rear guard must be able to cover by fire all approaches leading into the platoon position in order to prevent the enemy from overrunning the position and outflanking the rear guard.

(3) *Withdrawal by fire team maneuver.* Using this method, one fire team from each squad moves to the rear and takes up a position from which it is able to support the withdrawal of the fire team left on position. Machineguns are leapfrogged to the rear in the same way as fire teams. The situation will dictate when antitank weapons

withdraw. When tanks are available, they remain in position with the portion of the platoon in contact with the enemy. This method is best used when the enemy is in extremely close contact and may be expected to follow up the withdrawal. Consequently, APC's should be positioned one terrain feature to the rear and their machineguns used to protect the elements of the platoon as they withdraw.

c. At rallying points, squads and platoons pause only long enough to regain control. The platoon usually does not assemble until the platoon assembly area or subsequent position is reached. Fire and maneuver should be utilized only until such time as the platoon gains freedom of movement. Then the platoon moves rapidly in a tactical formation which provides security to the front, flanks, and rear.

d. Withdrawing units are careful not to mask the fires of covering forces to the rear. Withdrawing tanks fire on the enemy during the withdrawal. Platoons assemble at platoon assembly areas and move immediately to the company assembly area which is usually in the rear of the battalion covering force. After withdrawal of the forward platoons, the company covering force is withdrawn in a similar manner to the rear of the battalion covering force. Platoons may be dispatched to the next designated position individually upon reaching the company assembly area.

Section IV. DELAYING ACTIONS

(fig. 40)

142. General

a. A delaying action is an operation in which a unit trades space for time and inflicts casualties on the enemy without becoming decisively engaged in combat. Although the underlying principle of a delaying action is to gain time without fighting a decisive engagement, the platoon may be forced to accept close combat in order to accomplish the overall mission. The enemy is taken under fire at extreme range with all available weapons and is kept under an ever increasing volume of fire as he advances. Prior to the time the enemy launches an assault on the delaying force, it is withdrawn to the rear of covering forces or to another delay position.

b. The echelons of a delaying force consist of a security echelon, forward forces and reserves. The platoon usually participates in a delaying action as part of the company. The company may

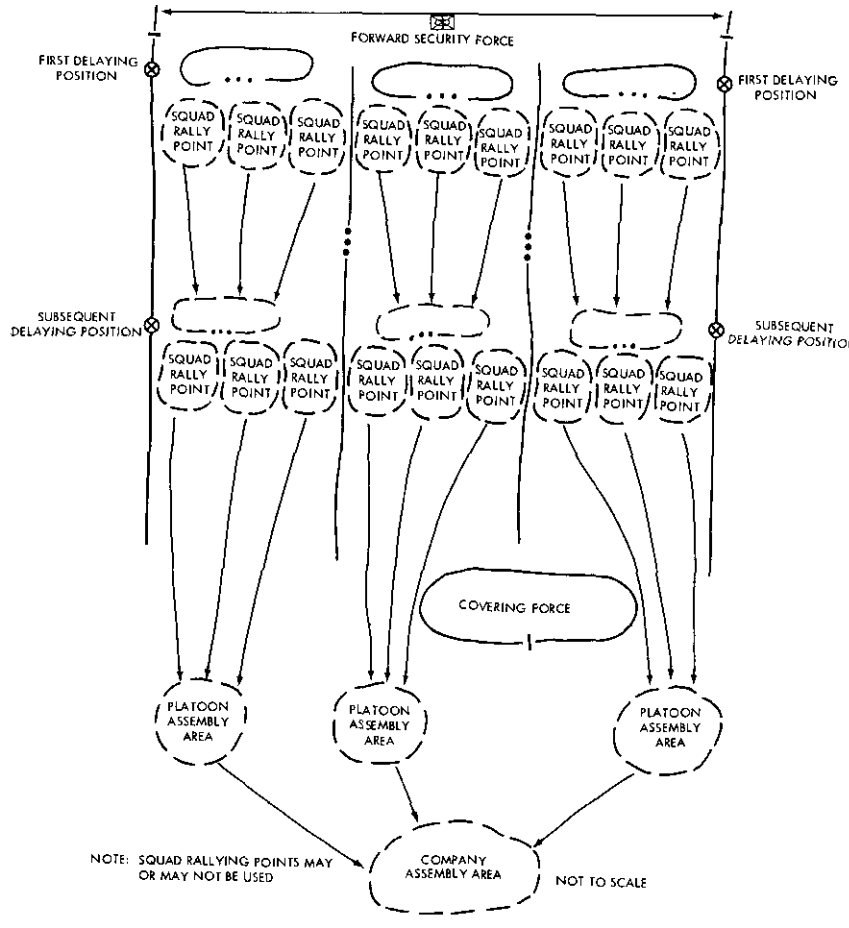


Figure 40. Delay from successive positions (schematic).

occupy the forward area, provide all or part of the security force, or may provide all or part of the battalion reserve.

c. A delaying mission usually directs the holding of an enemy force beyond a definite line until a stated time. The reason is normally announced. The delay may be accomplished from one position or a series of positions. In selecting terrain for a delaying action, the following characteristics are desirable:

(1) Good observation and long fields of fire. Positions on topographical crests will facilitate long range fires.

(2) Concealment and cover for the forces on the delaying position.

(3) Obstacles to the front and flanks. Where natural obstacles do not exist or to supplement natural obstacles, arti-

ficial obstacles such as barbed wire, abatis, craters, and minefields will be utilized.

(4) A series of parallel ridges across the axis of enemy advance in order to conduct delay from successive positions.

(5) Concealed routes of withdrawal.

d. The company commander will assign platoon areas as he would in the defense. Due to the wide frontage assigned in a delaying action, all rifle platoons of the company will generally be employed forward. There will be unoccupied areas between platoons which will be covered by fire, obstacles, patrols, and surveillance devices. The platoon may physically occupy an area up to 400 meters wide under ideal conditions.

e. The company commander's order for the delaying action will include the following:

(1) *Platoon positions and areas of responsibility.* The company commander will designate the general location of platoon positions as well as areas to be covered by fire and observation.

(2) *Local security.* The platoon will be required to establish observation and listening posts, and conduct patrols in accordance with the company security plan.

(3) *Zone of action.* In order to conduct delay from successive positions, or if delaying action is necessary while moving to the rear, the platoon will be assigned a zone of action.

(4) *Successive positions.* When the delay is to be accomplished from successive positions, the positions will be designated in advance.

(5) *Company and platoon assembly areas.* Normally the company commander selects platoon assembly areas in the rear of the first echelon of the covering force. The company assembly area is located further to the rear.

(6) *Routes.* Routes from the platoon assembly area to the company assembly area are designated.

(7) *Priority of withdrawal.* Normally the time of withdrawal from the initial delay position will not be known. The withdrawal from position will be on order. The company commander will designate a sequence of withdrawal in the event he desires one or more platoons to remain on position to protect the withdrawal of other platoons. Normally the least engaged platoons are withdrawn first.

(8) *Phase lines.* In event it is necessary to coordinate the action of platoons between delay positions and for reporting progress of the delay, phase lines are designated. Ideally, these phase lines are located on easily identifiable terrain features running perpendicular to the direction of withdrawal.

(9) *Attachments of supporting weapons to supported unit.* To facilitate control, supporting weapons located in the platoon area are attached to the platoon when the withdrawal from the initial delay position begins.

f. The platoon order for the delaying action will include—

(1) *Squad positions and areas of responsibility.* The platoon leader will select positions for each squad, organic and supporting weapon, and will assign overlapping sectors of fire and observation. Sectors of fire are assigned automatic weapons, tanks and other antitank weapons. Positions are selected on terrain which insures long range fires and observation, and provides routes of withdrawal.

(2) *Security measures.* The platoon leader will designate the position of local security elements and specify other security measures in accordance with the company security plan.

(3) *Routes.* Squads are assigned routes of withdrawal to the rear within the platoon zone of action.

(4) *Rallying points.* Squad rallying points may be assigned along the squad route of withdrawal, with the initial rallying point being in the first covered location to the rear of the squad position.

(5) *Successive positions.* When successive delay positions or tentative delay positions are selected, each squad and supporting weapon will be assigned a position and a mission on each subsequent position.

(6) *Method of withdrawal.* The method of withdrawal from position will be designated in advance (par. 141*b*).

(7) *Attachment of supporting units.* Elements of the weapons squad located in the area of a rifle squad are attached to that rifle squad when the withdrawal from a delay position begins. Normally, squad and section-sized supporting weapons attached to the platoon are not further attached.

143. Planning and Preparation

a. Planning is as detailed as time permits. Detailed reconnaissance is conducted by all leaders of withdrawal routes, subsequent positions, rallying points, and assembly areas. The platoon leader will issue detailed orders for the occupation of the initial positions and subsequent delay positions and specify how the delay will be conducted from each of these positions. He will also direct the positioning of local security, the method of withdrawal, routes to be used to the rear, squad and platoon rallying points, if used, and alternate plans to provide flexibility.

b. Platoon and squad leaders should prepare detailed fire plans to include indirect fires and insure adequate firepower on all possible enemy approaches into the position. Alternate and supplementary positions should be selected for squads, crew-served, and supporting weapons to insure flexibility and the ability to mass fires on the enemy at extreme range.

c. When APC's are available, the platoon leader may utilize the mounted machinegun in the conduct of the delay. They should be positioned in hull defilade to facilitate rapid loading and movement to the rear.

d. Tanks may be utilized in the conduct of the delay, taking advantage of their firepower, to include the extremely long range of the primary weapon.

144. Conduct of the Delaying Action

a. The rifle platoon's withdrawal from a delaying position is directed by the company commander after receipt of orders from the battalion commander. The platoon leader must keep the company commander informed of the situation at all times. If communication with the company commander is lost, the platoon leader makes the decision to withdraw, based on his assigned mission, the overall concept of operation, and the enemy situation. At the earliest opportunity, he informs the company commander of his actions. Withdrawal plans should provide for pyrotechnics in the event wire or radio communications are lost.

b. The enemy is engaged by fire at long range. Every effort is made to force him to deploy in order to effect maximum delay. Normally, forward elements are withdrawn on order before they become engaged in close combat with an enemy unit of sufficient size to force them off position. The withdrawal from a delay position is normally conducted using daylight withdrawal techniques.

c. In withdrawing from the delay position, the first elements of the platoon withdraw rapidly and occupy the next position to the rear. This position may be a rallying point or another delay

position from which these elements are able to support the withdrawal of the remainder of the platoon. The withdrawing element may join on the intermediate position or be leapfrogged to the rear. The platoon sergeant (or weapons squad leader in the absence of the platoon sergeant) usually moves with the first element to move to the rear, while the platoon leader remains with the portion of the platoon actually engaged with the enemy. Elements of the weapons squad should be attached to the rifle squads in whose areas they are located during the conduct of the delay.

d. The platoon leader controls the actions of his platoon to comply with the instructions of the company commander. The rifle platoon may be required to engage in decisive combat with the enemy in order to accomplish the company mission, or it may be required to counterattack in order to extricate another platoon. During the conduct of the delay the platoon must utilize prior planning, the terrain, available firepower, all available communications (primarily radio), and flexibility to the maximum in order to accomplish its mission.

Section V. MECHANIZED PLATOON IN RETROGRADE OPERATIONS

145. General

The mechanized platoon will execute retrograde operations as part of a mechanized infantry company or a tank company task force. The considerations in paragraphs 129 through 144 will apply to the mechanized platoon in either case. The mechanized platoon leader must be thoroughly familiar with retrograde operations as discussed in FM 7-11. The mechanized platoon is able to move more rapidly and over greater distances because of its inherent mobility. Maintenance and resupply of fuel will be a constant consideration.

146. Night Withdrawal

The considerations discussed in paragraphs 134 through 137 will apply to the mechanized platoon with these differences.

a. APC's must be moved to the rear in a manner that will not prematurely disclose the fact that a withdrawal is being conducted. Three techniques of withdrawing APC's are outlined below. The company commander will prescribe the technique to be used by the mechanized rifle platoon.

(1) APC's except those provided for detachments left in contact may be withdrawn shortly after dark to the company assembly area. Artillery and mortar fires are used to

cover the noise of movement. This technique may be used when routes to the rear are limited and when early movement of APC's can be made without compromising secrecy.

(2) All APC's may remain initially in their forward positions. The main body moves on foot to the rear to a predesignated assembly area or along a route where they may later be picked up by APC's remaining on position. Immediately prior to the withdrawal of the detachments left in contact, APC's for the main body begin their movement to the rear where they pick up designated elements of the main body. (It is essential that plans provide for loading of dismounted elements on specifically designated APC's. This will facilitate loading and insure retention of tactical integrity during the remainder of the move and on the next position.) Until the APC's begin their withdrawal, the machineguns mounted on them may be used to provide additional firepower to the detachments left in contact. One man may be provided to fire the machinegun on each APC. This technique is appropriate when multiple routes to the rear will enable a quick and orderly withdrawal of all APC's and when there is danger of compromising the secrecy of the withdrawal by earlier movement.

(3) All forces on position may withdraw simultaneously without using detachments left in contact.

b. Because of the distances which can be quickly covered and the difficulty in maintaining orientation when moving mounted at night, it is extremely important that all drivers and vehicle commanders be thoroughly oriented on the route of withdrawal and measures used to control the movement. Specific control measures which can be used are—

(1) Establishment of a maximum speed and distance between vehicles to prevent element of a column from becoming split in rough terrain. These factors are determined by the degree of visibility, the skill and level of training of drivers in night movement, and the degree of enemy pressure.

(2) The use of guides at critical road junctions and turn-off points. These guides can be picked up by the last vehicle passing through.

(3) The use of flashlights with infrared filters placed on trees or stakes at critical points along the route. These flashlights can be seen by drivers through the infrared scope.

The flashlights can also be picked up by the last APC passing through.

c. All drivers must be thoroughly trained in night driving techniques and in the use of the infrared driving system on the APC.

d. Individuals are designated to observe from the hatches in all directions. If the column is halted more than momentarily, sufficient troops dismount to provide all-round security.

e. Because of the large number of radios organic to the platoon, radio discipline must be emphasized to prevent compromise. A technique is to place the "receive-transmit" switch on vehicular radios on the "receive" setting.

f. The commander of the platoon detachments left in contact may consider equipping his force with the machineguns organic to the rifle squads in order to provide automatic fire coverage of the entire position. He will also be able to use the machinegun mounted on the APC in the conduct of the action. The infrared equipment mounted on the APC may also be used for surveillance.

147. Daylight Withdrawal

The considerations discussed in paragraphs 138 through 141 will apply to the mechanized platoon with these differences:

a. Contact with the enemy can be broken more rapidly and movement to the rear expedited.

b. The APC's must not be exposed unnecessarily to antitank fire.

c. In the event an APC becomes disabled, the platoon leader must have plans to transport the load normally carried on that APC. Frequently an APC will be disabled and the platoon leader not be aware of this fact unless rallying points are used and reports rendered by subordinate leaders.

d. The mounted machinegun on the APC may be used in the conduct of the action, as well as the machineguns organic to each rifle squad.

148. Delaying Action

The considerations discussed in paragraphs 142 through 144 will apply to the mechanized platoon with these differences:

a. The mechanized platoon will frequently employ offensive action, in conjunction with tanks, in conducting the delay.

b. Care must be exercised to insure that APO's do not move laterally in the face of the enemy.

c. APC's should be moved to the rear over concealed routes.

d. The mechanized platoon will frequently employ the tactics and techniques for delaying actions discussed in this manual.

CHAPTER 5

AIRBORNE/AIRMOBILE OPERATIONS

Section I. GENERAL

149. Purpose and Scope

a. This chapter provides guidance to the platoon and squad leaders in the conduct of airborne and airmobile operations.

b. For a more detailed discussion of joint airborne operations see FM 57–10 (when published); for airmobile operations see FM 57–35. FM 7–11 explains these operations as they pertain to the rifle company. TM 57–100 explains details concerning technical training of the parachutist, to include duties of the jumpmaster.

150. Definitions

a. Airborne Operations. An operation involving the movement and delivery by air of combat forces and their logistical support by air-landing or airdrop into an objective area. Airborne operations include joint airborne operations (parachute or air-landed) and airmobile operations (parachute or air-landed).

b. Airmobile Operations. An operation in which combat forces and their equipment move about the battlefield in aerial vehicles under the control of a ground force commander to engage in ground combat. One of the primary differences between airmobile operations and joint airborne operations is that in airmobile operations the aerial transport is under the control of the ground force commander. These operations are usually tactical operations limited in mission, range, and duration. Airmobile operations are normally unilateral, but they may be conducted as part of a joint airborne operations.

c. Joint Airborne Operations. An operation conducted by Army forces together with forces of another service, usually the Air Force. They may be either strategic or tactical in nature. They may be either parachute assault, or air-landed assault, or a combination of the two using medium transport and assault aircraft.

151. Tactical Employment

a. In airborne operations, the rifle platoon normally fights as a part of the rifle company. The rifle platoon may be required, however, to fight independently or semi-independently during all or a part of the operation. Normally this will occur when the platoon is unable to land on the same drop zone or landing zone with the remainder of the company as in the case of aircraft failure or inaccurate aerial delivery.

b. The rifle platoon can land in unprepared terrain relatively free of obstacles that are hinderances to the selected delivery means. The assault landing may be made during daylight or under periods of reduced visibility. The platoon can fight immediately upon landing but it can fight most effectively if it has time to assemble as a tactical unit under control of the platoon leader. Usually this takes more time in parachute operations than in air-landed operations.

c. After an airborne assault landing, the rifle platoon operates tactically in substantially the same manner as discussed in previous chapters. Following the assault phase in which initial objectives are seized, the platoon may defend as part of the company until link-up with friendly ground forces, or until build up of forces by aerial delivery permits resumption of the mission. In some situations, it may continue offensive operations immediately after the assault phase with a subsequent link-up or withdrawal.

152. Echelonment

Combat elements of a force that are to participate in a joint airborne operation are normally organized into an assault echelon, a follow-up echelon, or a rear echelon. Combat elements of a force that is to participate in an airmobile operation are normally organized into an assault echelon and a rear echelon. The rifle platoon is usually a part of the assault echelon in each operation. For further explanation of echelonment, see FM 7–11.

153. Organization for Combat

The platoon will often be reinforced for airborne operations. These reinforcements may include FO teams, antitank weapons, medical personnel, indirect fire means, and communications equipment and personnel. Attachments will be assigned by the company commander on the basis of the mission and the tactical situation. For a discussion of airborne patrols see FM 21–75.

Section II. PLANNING

154. General

a. Although the tactical principles for airborne operations are applicable for both joint airborne and airmobile operations, it should be recognized that airmobile operations can be planned and executed with far greater simplicity.

b. Planning for joint airborne and airmobile operations is virtually identical, the primary difference being in the amount of time available for planning, and the elaboration and detail of the plans themselves.

c. Planning as it is outlined in this section applies to all airborne operations. Where differences exist between joint airborne operations and airmobile operations it will be indicated.

155. Intelligence Planning

Every effort will be made to study the terrain in the objective area by use of maps and aerial photographs, and to learn everything that is available about the enemy that may affect the employment of the platoon. Each man should thoroughly understand the instructions pertaining to escape and evasion and methods of marking pickup sites for evacuating personnel from downed aircraft.

156. Planning Sequence

Planning for airborne operations is best developed by reverse planning from the objective area as follows:

a. A ground tactical plan which includes an assault plan and an accompanying fire support plan, and a link-up plan or withdrawal plan.

b. A landing plan which indicates sequence, time, and place of arrival of troops and material.

c. An air movement plan which is based on the landing plan.

d. A marshalling plan which is based on the air movement plan.

157. Ground Tactical Plan

a. General. Based on the order from the company commander, the platoon leader develops his plan of attack to seize the assigned objective and the plan to defend his assigned area. When included as part of the company order, he develops a plan for subsequent offens' operations, a link-up plan, and a plan for withdrawal.

(1) *Objective area.* For ease of control, all members of the platoon must be thoroughly familiar with the physical

characteristics of the objective area, and squads must be assigned definite, easily recognizable sectors. The attack should be planned so that during the assault and reorganization, adjustment and shifting of forces is kept to a minimum. Positions for the base of fire elements and routes for the maneuvering force should be preselected, with alternates, so that each man knows exactly where to go and what to do. To this end, detailed rehearsals should be conducted by the platoon on terrain which approximates the objective area as closely as possible. Personnel should be thoroughly oriented on the physical characteristics of the objective area. Maps and aerial photographs, terrain models, and sketches provide some means of familiarizing individuals with the area of operations. All known information to include depth of rivers, types of roads, bridges and buildings should be provided to squad and platoon members. Knowledge of the direction of landing assists leaders in orientation upon landing. Close coordination with pilots during flight and landing in airmobile operations is necessary. Pathfinders can provide assistance in orientation and marking of assembly areas.

(2) *Security.* The company commander will designate the location of certain security detachments for the company area. They usually become the responsibility of the platoon whose sector they are nearest. In this case, the platoon leader designates the soldiers to man these security detachments. He may place additional local security after coordinating with the company commander to supplement the company security plan.

(3) *Reserve.* To insure rapid seizure of the objective area, all rifle platoons of a company often have an assault mission. One or more rifle platoons may be given reserve missions during the planning phase, to be accomplished on order.

b. Assault Plan. The assault plan consists of a scheme of maneuver and a plan of fire support. It is designed to capitalize on the surprise gained by the assault landing and to provide for rapid seizure of the assigned objective. The scheme of maneuver provides for seizing the assigned objectives and clearing the assigned zone of responsibility. In a parachute assault, the platoon normally assembles and reorganizes in its assembly area and attacks to seize its objective on order of the company commander. The platoon may be directed to attack before it is completely

assembled. An attack position and line of departure are seldom used. Platoon objectives are selected to insure the seizure and control of the assigned company objective(s) and to accomplish other missions. Normally, intermediate objectives are not assigned because the platoon usually lands close to its objective.

c. Defense Plan. The platoon is normally assigned a portion of the company sector to defend. The organization of the defense is similar to that discussed in chapter 3. Because the area to defend will frequently be large, mutual support between platoons may be limited. Platoons are located to protect key terrain features and cover the most likely avenues of approach into the company sector of responsibility.

d. Fire Support. Fire support planning for an airborne operation at platoon level consists essentially of determining the best locations for and method of employment of organic weapons such as machineguns and antitank weapons and determining what types of nonorganic fire support are available and how they can be obtained. Mortar and artillery fire, close air support and suppressive fires from army aircraft may be available. The platoon leader should brief all his subordinate leaders on methods of obtaining fire support, to include location, call sign and frequencies of FO and FAC teams in the area.

e. Link-Up. Link-up coordination will normally be accomplished at higher levels unless the platoon is given an independent mission. The information which the platoon leader should receive includes—

(1) A system of mutual recognition (armbands, pyrotechnics, vehicle markings, and panels).

(2) Coordination of communication (knowledge of link-up force call signs and frequencies).

(3) Point of link-up, if link-up is to occur in his area, all members of the platoon should be thoroughly briefed on the details of link-up coordination and operations of other friendly units in the area to avoid mistakes in recognition.

f. Withdrawal. A withdrawal by air may be executed as a planned phase of an airborne operation, or it may become necessary due to unforeseen tactical developments. The company plan of withdrawal with alternates is the basis of the platoon leaders withdrawal plans.

158. Landing Plan

Based on the company commander's order, landing zones are assigned; assembly areas are designated; assembly aids are pre-

scribed. Also on the basis of this order the platoon leader plans for necessary security of his portion of the assembly area during reorganization and assigns each squad a definite sector of responsibility to include security posts and roadblocks when necessary.

159. Air Movement Plan

a. Joint Airborne Operations. At platoon level this consists primarily in assisting the company commander in preparing air-loading tables for the platoon. These will be based on the type of aircraft to be used, with consideration to maintaining the tactical integrity of the squad and platoon. It may be necessary to load the platoon in more than one aircraft; in which case, the platoon leader insures equitable distribution of leaders, weapons, crews, and communication equipment.

b. Airmobile Operations. In airmobile operations the air movement plan covers such details as flight routes, speed and altitude of the aircraft, location of checkpoints, and aircraft formations. All leaders within the platoon must be familiar with these details so that during the flight they can keep themselves oriented on the terrain and know the position of the aircraft relative to the objective and other elements in the flight or serial. This is necessary so that in case of a forced landing short of the objective area, they will be able to evaluate their situation and take appropriate action based on their assigned mission.

160. Marshalling Plan

a. General. Marshalling is based on the plans for air movement and landing, which, in turn, support the ground tactical plan.

b. Joint Airborne Operations. The platoon leader will base his actions on the company marshalling plan which gives the plan for movement, preparation of personnel and equipment for loading, loading of aircraft and briefing of troops.

c. Airmobile Operations. The marshalling plan for airmobile operations is generally the same as in joint airborne operations, except that it is less detailed and complex. Since normally, there are more aircraft involved in airmobile operations, attention must be given to insure that tactical integrity, at least to fire teams and weapons teams, is maintained during load planning.

Section III. CONDUCT OF JOINT AIRBORNE OPERATIONS

161. Marshalling

Marshalling is a process used to complete final preparations for combat, move to departure airfields or air-landing facilities, and

load for take off. When marshalling begins, units are sealed in marshalling areas or their assembly areas, and strict security is imposed. Marshalling is accomplished in the shortest time possible, usually less than 48 hours. Preparations are completed, including the finalization of plans, briefing of troops, and final preparation of supplies and equipment for aerial delivery.

162. Actions in Marshalling Area

a. Briefing. All troops are briefed in as much detail as time permits. The platoon leader's briefing covers the entire tactical operation. In case of inaccurate landings this insures the squads can conduct themselves in accordance with the overall plan of the platoon and company. Although briefings by aircraft loads are necessary, most of the briefing is conducted on the basis of the organization for ground combat. A platoon leader may also be a jumpmaster in which case he must give a final briefing to the parachutists prior to entering the aircraft. Integrity of squads within aircraft loads is desirable but cannot always be achieved. The platoon leader first briefs his squad leaders and when time permits the entire platoon. Squad leaders in turn brief their squads. The squad leader further supplements this by briefing individually each man in his squad. The platoon is briefed in minute detail, using all available briefing aids and techniques, such as terrain models, aerial photographs, and maps. The briefing includes a detailed orientation on the enemy situation, terrain, mission, objective, plan of the attack, fire support, and reorganization. It thoroughly covers movement to, and loading the aircraft; aircraft characteristics; safety instruction; air movement; landing, and assembly. In addition all personnel are briefed on escape procedures in the event that an aircraft has an emergency over enemy territory and the soldiers aboard are not able to join a friendly unit. The success of the operation lies in the effectiveness of the small unit leader's briefing. Security is emphasized to prevent individuals from carrying such items of intelligence as plans and orders into the objective area.

b. Preparation of Equipment for Aerial Delivery. For parachute operations, the preparation of accompanying supplies and equipment for aerial delivery is completed during marshalling. Aerial delivery containers, cargo parachutes, and related equipment are issued to the platoon as necessary for packing equipment that is to be carried on individuals, delivered as door bundles, and dropped by monorail. Troops pack this equipment in the company area. They mark the bundles distinctively to make them easier to identify and recover. The platoon and squad leaders must actively supervise these activities and continuously check to

see that bundles are properly marked, that all equipment is present and properly packaged, that any additional equipment prescribed by the company commander is included, that soldiers are completely familiar with the loads they are to carry, and what equipment is to be included in door loads. The platoon leader will designate soldiers to recover supplies and equipment not carried by individuals.

c. Concurrent Actions in the Marshalling Area. In addition to the actions already listed, the following actions take place in the marshalling area.

(1) Issue of special items of equipment which may include such items as maps, photographs, and escape kits.

(2) Issue of parachutes.

(3) Security inspections for diaries, letters, or other unauthorized documents.

d. Loading of Equipment and Jumpmaster Inspection. The platoon leader is responsible for loading his personnel, supplies, and equipment in accordance with the company loading plan. Personnel parachutes are pre-fitted and equipment is loaded and secured early. Troops load at the last possible moment to reduce mission compromise and to minimize the period that they will be massed at the departure site. Aircraft crews supervise and provide technical assistance in the lashing of equipment. The pilot, loadmaster (AF), and jumpmaster (Army) inspect the loaded aircraft. In addition to this inspection, the jumpmaster must inspect and brief personnel prior to boarding the plane. For details pertaining to duties of the jumpmaster see TM 57–220.

e. Loading of Troops and Equipment. The platoon moves from the assembly area by planeload(s) to loading sites designated by the company plan. On arriving at the loading site, each planeload moves directly to its assigned aircraft and boards it. In air-landed operations planeloads are assigned to insure enough men are placed in each loaded aircraft to unload and unlash the equipment at the objective; that unit integrity is kept by tactical loading, and that every towed load is accompanied by a suitable prime mover.

f. Conduct of Troops and Vehicles on Airfields. Troop commanders are responsible to insure that soldiers on the airfield whether dismounted or in vehicles—

(1) Obtain permission from control tower before moving onto an airfield.

(2) Cross runways, taxi strips, and ramps at double time.

(3) Allow no smoking within 50 feet of aircraft on the ground.

(4) Remain away from propeller arc at all times even when engine is not running.

(5) Do not approach within 150 feet of jet exhaust or within 50 feet of jet intakes.

163. Air Movement

a. During the air movement, the pilot is the aircraft commander and is in absolute charge of the aircraft, all crew members, and all passengers.

b. The jumpmaster in each aircraft is designated as the aircraft troop commander and is responsible for the discipline and conduct of the troops and preflight inspection of aircraft safety equipment. In the event that the aircraft aborts in flight the jumpmaster, to insure that action is being taken, will ask the pilot to contact the Departure Airfield Control Officer to determine if another aircraft is available to deliver his cargo. If the answer is negative, the jumpmaster will request that his unit commander be notified of the abort.

c. Emergency conditions which may arise during flight and actions to be taken are as follows:

(1) Mechanical failure—await orders from the pilot.

(2) Human error—await orders from the pilot.

(3) Fire—

(*a*) Engine fire—extinguish by pilot.

(*b*) Wing fire—await orders from the pilot.

(*c*) Fuselage fire—extinguish immediately.

(*d*) Collision in flight—await orders unless ship is obviously out of control.

d. Actions To Take in an Emergency.

(1) Standby for emergency landing—fasten seat belts.

(2) Lighten ship—throw out all equipment not essential to the continued navigation of the aircraft or safety of the passengers.

(3) Prepare for crash landing—as directed by pilot or his representative.

(4) Abandon ship (parachute operations)—exit aircraft.

164. Landing

a. The platoon lands on or as close as possible to its objective to achieve maximum surprise and to avoid unnecessary movement of troops, supplies, and equipment. It is desirable to land directly on an undefended objective. A landing directly on a *defended* objective increases the problems of reorganization and control.

b. In parachute operations, heavy drop equipment and supplies are normally delivered on the same drop zone that the platoon uses, but in some situations a different drop zone may have to be used.

165. Assembly and Reorganization

a. The assembly and reorganization period during the initial assault is critical because of the unit's vulnerability to attack. The operations are executed with maximum speed and precision.

b. When a unit lands directly on or immediately adjacent to its initial objective(s), an assembly area may not have to be used. Squads, platoons, and special teams assemble on the drop zone and proceed to their objectives immediately. In this type of assault, reorganization is accomplished concurrently with, or immediately after, the seizure of initial objectives. Briefing for this type operation must be extremely detailed for each man. Units assigned a reconnaissance or a security mission normally employ these methods.

c. When an assembly area is designated, individuals move directly to it. No attempt is made to assemble units on the drop or landing zone. In parachute operations, the men designated by the platoon leader to recover supplies and equipment do so immediately and move to the assembly area. Radios are put into operation as soon as the operator lands.

d. If the platoon is engaged by the enemy on the drop or landing zone, soldiers return fire immediately. Leaders take control of groups of men, regardless of unit, and try to eliminate the enemy force by small unit action. Aggressiveness is necessary in gaining control and in attacking the enemy force without hesitation.

e. Assembly aids are used as planned. If enemy action so requires, aids are set up to direct the troops to an alternate assembly area. Security is posted as planned.

f. Communication is established with the company and within the platoon. Squad leaders keep the platoon leader informed of the status of their squads during assembly and reorganization. An SOP should be developed within the platoon so that periodic reports reach the platoon leader when each squad reaches certain percentages of assembly. The platoon leader must, in turn, report his platoon's percentage of assembly periodically to the company commander.

166. Conduct of the Attack

a. Immediately after landing, the platoon may be required to send patrols to reconnoiter the objective area in order to provide

the company commander with accurate information as to enemy strength and dispositions. Planning and briefing for these patrols should be accomplished in the marshalling area, but the platoon leader's plan must be flexible enough to permit use of men immediately available in the assembly area. Based on what the patrols learn of the enemy, the company commander determines the extent of reorganization necessary before the attack is launched. Consequently, the platoon may begin the assault before assembly is complete, especially if the objective is lightly defended.

b. The conduct of the attack is generally as described in chapter 2. The platoon leader modifies his original plan of attack according to the degree of assembly of the platoon and newly acquired information of the enemy and terrain. Aggressiveness and rapidity of movement are necessary to capitalize on surprise. After seizure of the initial objective, the platoon consolidates to defend the assigned sector or takes whatever action is indicated by the mission.

167. Subsequent Operations

a. When the assault phase is followed by a defense of the objective area, the platoon normally defends a portion of the FEBA. Antitank defense of the objective area is emphasized. For organization and conduct of the defense see chapter 3.

b. When the ground forces are to link up near the platoon's sector of the objective area, the platoon leader insures that coordination measures are circulated to and carried out by members of the platoon. The measures may include coordination of fires, a system of mutual recognition, and coordination of communication.

c. Subsequent offensive action after the assault phase is conducted as described in chapter 2.

d. For a discussion of withdrawal by air from the objective area see paragraphs 172 through 175.

Section IV. CONDUCT OF AIRMOBILE OPERATIONS

168. Marshalling

a. Prior to the arrival of transporting aircraft, platoons prepare for the attack as described in chapter 2. Briefings and rehearsals are conducted and all equipment is prepared for loading. The platoon is organized into aircraft loads in accordance with the loading plan.

b. Aircraft loads are disposed in the loading area for quick loading. Exact touchdown points as designated by the company commander are established and marked for each aircraft.

c. Men not accompanying the airmobile force are employed as ground hookup teams to sling loads.

d. If communication security permits, unit or aircraft radios may be used to control loading; otherwise visual signals are used. When possible, spare aircraft should be available in case any aircraft *aborts* during the loading process.

169. Air Movement

The platoon leader must keep the company commander informed of the progress of the loading and in any changes in serial composition, delays, etc., due to or during take off. During the flight to the landing zone or drop zone the platoon and squad leaders keep themselves oriented with the terrain and mentally review their actions upon landing. Personnel in the aircraft may be questioned as to their actions upon landing. Just prior to landing the troop leader alerts his men and prepares for the assault phase of the operation.

170. The Assault

a. General.

(1) The assault phase of an airmobile operation begins with the landing of the lead elements and continues through the seizure of the objective area and the initial occupation of the security positions.

(2) Ground combat in airmobile operations is conducted along conventional lines but under unusual conditions.

(3) The fact that an airmobile force usually lands where there are few fixed defenses and few well organized combat troops facilitates rapid seizure of initial objectives. The enemy may be expected to react rapidly. He will usually employ armored units in these attacks, if available. The early preparation of a defense against armor is therefore a major consideration.

(4) In an airmobile assault the platoon may land within or near the objective area.

(*a*) Landing within the objective area involves the simultaneous landing of assault units directly upon or immediately adjacent to initial objectives and is used whenever feasible.

(*b*) Landing near the objective area involves landing, assembly, and reorganization and attack to seize initial objectives. This is used if the terrain and enemy situation do not permit landing on or immediately adjacent to initial objectives.

b. Landing and Reorganization.

(1) *General.* The period between the start of the landing and the end of the reorganization of the assault elements is the most critical one as far as vulnerability to enemy attack is concerned. When the platoon lands on or immediately adjacent to the initial objective, it may have to delay reorganization until the objective has been seized.

(2) *Landing.*

(*a*) The rifle platoon and squad will land on dispersed landing sites according to the planned tactical employment. Supporting weapons land as close as possible to their planned initial firing positions.

(*b*) All individuals and units land with essential weapons, equipment, and ammunition to insure their combat readiness, and to reduce the time required for assembly. Additional equipment and supplies are delivered in later serials.

(*c*) Troops and equipment are unloaded from aircraft quickly and cleared from the landing sites. This facilitates control of incoming aircraft, reduces danger of accidents, and reduces casualties from enemy fires.

(*d*) When enemy fires interfere with the landing, prompt countermeasures are taken by all available means.

(3) *Reorganization.*

(*a*) When the platoon lands directly on or immediately adjacent to their initial objectives, squads proceed to their objectives immediately, with little or no reorganization. In this type of assault, they reorganize concurrently with or soon after seizure of the initial objectives.

(*b*) When assembly areas are required, they are located within or adjacent to landing zones but clear of landing sites. The platoon elements that land first may be charged with gaining and maintaining security of the landing zones. Succeeding elements move intact directly from the landing sites to the predesignated assembly areas, assisted by guides and other appropriate assembly aids. All elements carry with them the equipment they immediately require for their missions. Upon arrival in assembly areas, small unit commanders report the status of their units, receive any new instructions, and continue their missions. These reports of readiness for action permit the company

commander to make any changes in missions that are warranted.

(*c*) Individuals may be designated to remain on landing zones to protect the area, care for casualties, or handle incoming supplies.

(*d*) Reorganization is complete when assault elements of all units are assembled and communication is established.

c. Seizure of Initial Objectives.

(1) The initial ground combat stresses the coordinated action of small units to seize initial objectives rapidly before the advantage of surprise is lost. All units attack as rapidly as the situation permits, using all available fire support. The attack is conducted as discussed in chapter 2.

(2) Units or personnel landed in areas other than those planned, direct their efforts to the general mission and establish contact with their unit as soon as practical.

(3) After initial objectives have been captured, the platoon may seize additional objectives that make a coordinated defense easier to establish.

171. The Defense

a. The period of time involved in the defense may vary from a few hours to a few days. The material in chapter 3 will apply.

b. Defense measures against armored attack and nuclear weapons are of particular importance in this type of operation.

c. Defense of the objective area at platoon level is accomplished by organizing and occupying the dominant terrain along the FEBA to cover main routes of approach into the position, covering unoccupied terrain between defended localities by fire, mines, and obstacles; patrolling; and occasionally by withholding a reserve. Enemy attacks are countered by shifting squads, reinforcing threatened areas, employing massed fire support, and counterattacking. The interior lines of communication in the all-round defense facilitate shifting troops, massing fires, and committing reserves, including units from portions of the FEBA not under attack. Reserve platoons are held in positions of readiness prepared to reinforce, counterattack, to occupy defense positions, or to execute blocking missions.

d. Continuing emphasis must be placed on improving and extending antitank defense in the objective area because of vulnerability to enemy armor. Organic antitank weapons, obstacles, and

tactical air and other available support must be used to maximum advantage.

e. During the defense, all or part of the platoon may occupy positions forward of the FEBA to supplement security positions. Units withdraw to the FEBA only when ordered to or when forced by enemy pressure. The conduct of the defense from these forward positions is similar to the conduct of a delaying action (ch. 4).

Section V. WITHDRAWAL BY AIR

172. General

a. A withdrawal by air is an operation in which all or part of a deployed force disengages from the enemy and moves by aircraft to another location. It may be conducted as the last phase of an airmobile operation, or it may be a means of extricating a ground unit which has become isolated on the battlefield. In the latter case, heavy equipment beyond the lift capability of available aircraft will be left behind and destroyed.

b. The rifle platoon may withdraw as a part of a larger force, or as an independent unit after conducting an independent operation.

c. A withdrawal by air may be conducted by day or night. Each method requires special techniques and both require well trained personnel and maximum control by leaders at all echelons.

173. Concept

To withdraw a force by air, part of the force must cover the withdrawal of the main body from contact, its movement to loading areas, and its evacuation. It is desirable to maintain unit integrity for control purposes and for subsequent operations. At times, a unit will withdraw intact; other times it may be required to leave detachments in contact or a covering force. Normally, least engaged units are withdrawn first. After the main body has been evacuated, the detachments left in contact break contact with the enemy and are evacuated, preferably by helicopter.

174. Reconnaissance

Detailed ground reconnaissance of squad and platoon assembly areas, routes of withdrawal to the loading site, and the loading area itself are highly desirable and should be conducted as soon as possible after occupation of the positions. Reconnaissance is conducted by leaders down to fire team level if time and the enemy situation permit. If possible, especially at night, guides should be used and routes marked.

175. Conduct of the Withdrawal

When the platoon leader receives the order to withdraw, he must insure that movement is conducted in orderly manner and security is maintained. He controls the movement of squads, and attachments if any, so that it is rapid and continuous through the squad and platoon assembly areas with minimum delay. He may use his platoon sergeant to assist by controlling movement through the platoon assembly area, or he may be left with the detachments left in contact. Movement to the loading zone is timed to avoid any delay in boarding aircraft. For further information concerning withdrawal by air, see FM 7–11.

CHAPTER 6

RIFLE PLATOON IN TACTICAL MOVEMENTS

Section I. GENERAL

176. General

a. A tactical movement is made when contact with the enemy is anticipated. The rifle platoon may participate in such tactical operations as movement to contact, retrograde operations, and movements to relocate troops according to operational plans. These movements may be mounted, dismounted, or by air. During all tactical movements, the platoon is prepared for enemy ground or air attack. The likelihood of enemy contact will vary from remote to imminent.

b. The formation adopted by the platoon is based on how soon enemy contact is anticipated. When anticipated contact is remote, the platoon is deployed in the column formation to facilitate ease of control, rapid movement, and other administrative considerations. Adequate dispersion is maintained to provide protection from air attack and artillery fires. When anticipated enemy contact is imminent, the platoon formation is determined by the mission, situation, terrain, weather, visibility, desired rate of speed, and the desired degree of flexibility (app. II).

c. The platoon leader and his subordinate leaders are responsible for the close-in security of their units regardless of security measures taken by higher commanders. Security against hostile air, CBR, and ground attack is provided during both movements and halts. Security measures during movements vary from observation to the use of small security detachments. During short halts, sentinels and small security detachments are positioned to provide all-round security. During longer halts, additional measures may include disposition of platoon elements to permit all-round defense. To be effective, security must provide adequate warning to permit the platoon to take such action as is necessary to protect itself against attack.

d. All available facilities, consistent with security considerations, are used to assist in maintaining control. During mounted movement, the principal means of communication are visual signals and radio.

e. Check points and phase lines may be used by higher commanders to assist in controlling subordinate units. Unless otherwise directed, platoon leaders report the arrival of their units at these locations to the company commander and continue the march without a halt.

177. Security Missions

Security missions which may be assigned the rifle platoon include advance party for the advance guard, flank guard, and rear guard. To accomplish its assigned security mission the rifle platoon may be required to attack, defend, or delay.

178. Night Movement

a. Night movement provides increased concealment from hostile observation and aids in maintaining secrecy. Difficulty of control at night dictates more detailed planning, a slower rate of movement, and more control measures. Formations are similar to those of a daylight movement; however, difficulty of control will often require reduction of distance between individuals and squads.

b. Techniques for control at night may include the posting of guides, marking of routes, marking of men for ease of identification, increased use of connecting files, infrared equipment, and more frequent reporting of the platoon location.

c. Emphasis is placed on maintaining secrecy by rigid enforcement of noise and light discipline, and by using covered routes.

Section II. TACTICAL FOOT MARCHES

179. Rifle Platoon as Advance Party

(fig. 41)

a. The mission of a rifle platoon as the advance party is to prevent unnecessary delay in the movement of the advance guard, protect it from surprise attack and ground observation from the front, and cover the deployment of the advance guard if necessary.

b. The advance party is provided by the advance guard company and is organized, from front to rear, into the point and the advance party minus. The advance party commander sends forward one rifle squad to serve as the point. Distances between elements of the advance party indicated in figure 41 are given as a guide *only* and will vary according to the terrain and visibility. These distances are prescribed initially by the commander of the advance guard and should be great enough to allow each succeeding element to deploy without serious interference from the enemy when contact is made. However, the distances are not so great

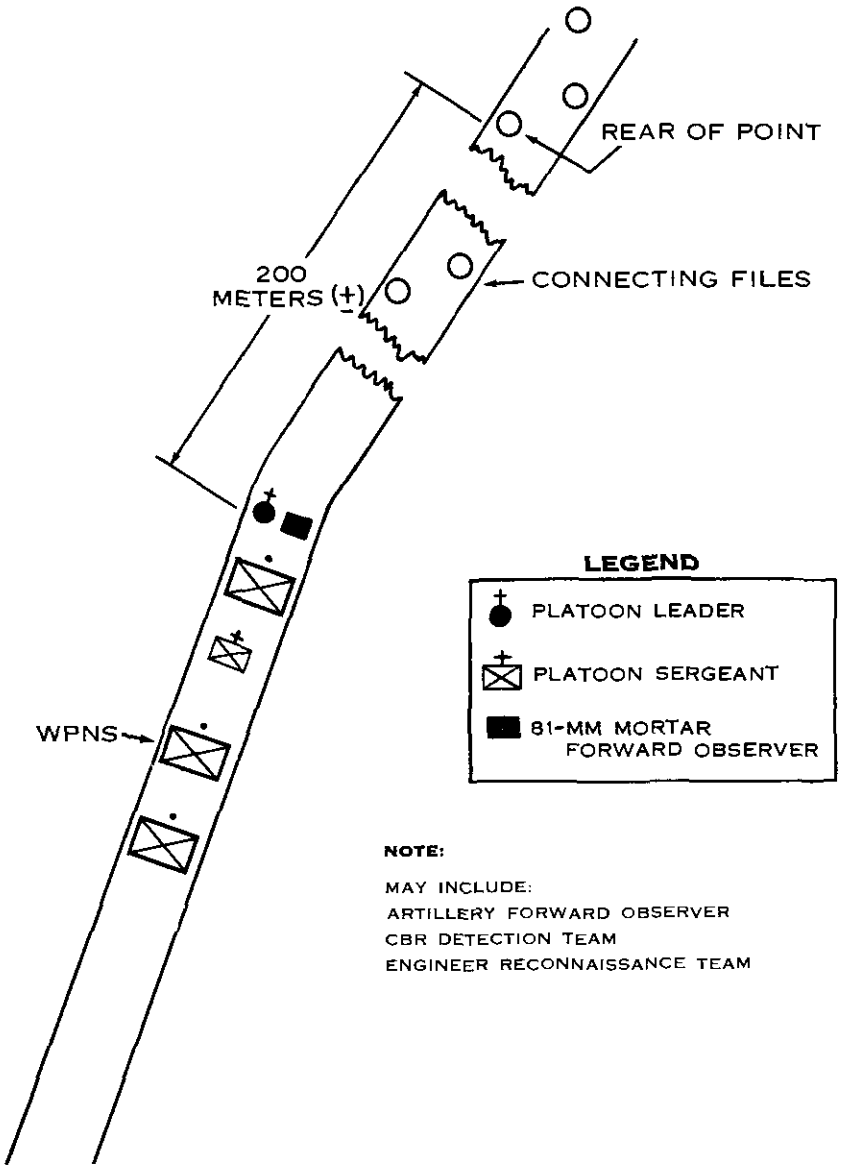


Figure 41. A type formation for the advance party (schematic).

as to prevent each element from rapidly assisting the element to its front.

c. All elements of the advance party take maximum advantage of available cover and concealment during the advance, consistent with the prescribed rate of march. If the advance is along a road, movement may be made a short distance to either side of the road

for maximum concealment from enemy ground and air observation. As a unit passes by crosstrails or crossroads, automatic riflemen are posted to cover its passage.

d. The advance party minus normally moves in a column formation with the platoon headquarters leading, followed by a rifle squad, the weapons squad, and the remaining rifle squad. They rely on observation for their security except when the terrain and visibility dictate the need for small security detachments to the flanks. Attachments are placed in the column where they can best be utilized by the platoon. Connecting files from the advance party minus maintain contact with the point at all times.

180. The Point

Along a road, the point moves in a squad column, fire teams abreast, with approximately ten meters between men (fig. 42). The leading two or three men are approximately 20 meters apart to give more security to the front. When moving cross-country, the point normally moves in a squad column formation, fire teams in column (fig. 43). Terrain permitting, the lead fire team will be well out in front for maximum security. The point does not

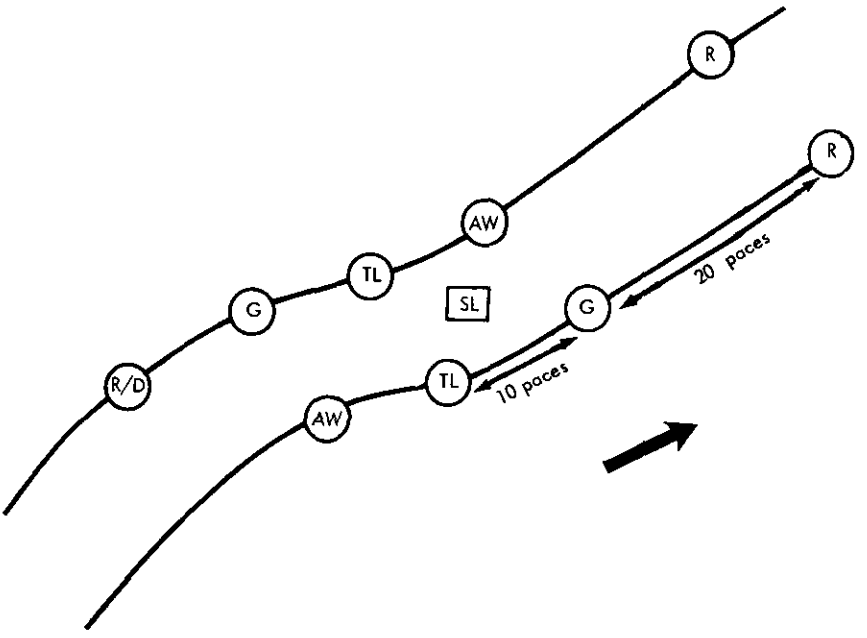


Figure 42. Point of the advance guard, fire teams abreast (schematic).
See figure 44 for symbols.

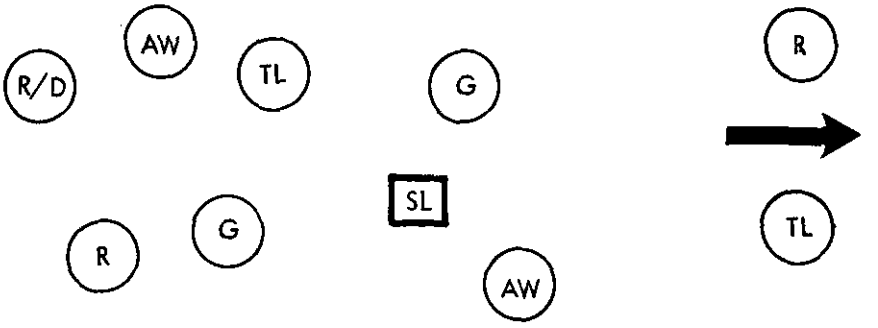


Figure 43. Point of the advance guard, fire teams in column (schematic). See figure 44 for symbols.

send out security to the flanks, but relies on dispersion and observation. When contact is imminent or in places favoring ambush, the point will move by bounds, one fire team covering the movement of the other. The squad leader will at all times position himself where he can best control his squad.

181. Conduct of the Advance Party

a. Advance party actions are characterized by rapid estimates of the situation and aggressive action. Unless otherwise ordered, elements of the advance party attack without hesitation to destroy the enemy. Upon encountering enemy resistance, the point returns fire immediately, deploys, and attacks. The advance party commander moves forward to a vantage point, makes a reconnaissance and an estimate of the situation, determines where to commit the advance party, and informs the company commander of the situation and his plan of action. If the point has been unsuccessful in reducing the enemy resistance, the advance party commander attacks with the entire advance party, preferably on the enemy flank, using all available firepower. When the enemy withdraws or is destroyed, the advance party reorganizes and resumes movement with all possible speed so the advance guard does not halt unnecessarily. If the advance party is unable to reduce the enemy resistance, it continues to fire on the enemy positions and reports the situation to the company commander.

b. When tanks are attached to the advance party, they are employed as a unit, and move by bounds to successive positions, one tank supporting the movement of another. Normally, tanks do not move with the point in a dismounted march. Because of its small size, the point is not able to accomplish its mission and also provide close-in infantry protection for the tanks.

182. Rifle Platoon as a Part of a Flank Guard Company

a. The mission of a flank guard company is to protect the main body from ground observation and surprise ground attack from the flank. In event of a flank attack, this mission may require the company to attack, defend, or delay to give the main body time to pass from the area, or time to deploy and maneuver.

b. The mission assigned to a flank guard company may be to occupy a series of terrain features to block likely enemy approaches into the flank of the main body, or to screen the flank by moving along parallel routes.

c. The selection of blocking positions for the flank guard is coordinated by the flank guard company commander with the protected unit commander. These blocking positions are on or near the route of the flank guard and are astride likely enemy avenues of approach. They are occupied on order or when enemy action forces their occupation. The blocking positions may be occupied by a platoon or the entire flank guard depending on how critical the approach is.

d. The formation used by a flank guard is designed to meet enemy threats at any point on the protected flank. When the area of responsibility is extensive and platoons widely separated, 81-mm mortar squads, tanks, antitank squads, and other elements may be attached to platoons for additional support. When the company is less widely deployed, these weapons may be kept centrally located under company control ready to fire or move to meet enemy threats wherever they occur. During movement, the leading platoon of the flank guard organizes and conducts itself as does the advance party of an advance guard (par. 181).

e. Movement of the flank guard is based on movement of the protected unit. Successive blocking positions are occupied on order by the alternate bounds method. The flank guard maintains close liaison with the protected unit by radio and with patrols. Upon halting of the main body, the flank guard occupies blocking positions which protect the flank.

f. The nature of a flank guard mission makes its effective accomplishment by a dismounted force extremely difficult. Because of the requirement for rapid movement, the flank guard will usually be mounted or provided with helicopter transportation.

183. Rifle Platoon as a Part of a Rear Guard Company

The company may be assigned the mission of rear guard of a larger force. The rear guard prevents enemy interference with the main body by stopping or delaying enemy forces attacking the rear and by preventing enemy direct fire and ground observed

indirect fire from harassing the main body. The organization of the rear guard is similar to the advance guard except it is oriented toward the rear. Enemy action may force the rear guard to deploy in width so that effective defensive or delaying actions may be conducted.

184. Rifle Platoon as Part of the Advance Guard or Main Body

a. Platoons of the advance guard (support) or main body move in column formations in the order of anticipated use. Platoon leaders march at the head of their platoons. To help control and prevent the formation from becoming unduly long, approximately two meters distance is maintained between men.

b. The company commander of the advance guard will normally specify that small security patrols operate on the flanks and abreast of the company, maintaining contact by connecting files.

c. Following units are always responsible for sending connecting files forward to maintain contact with the preceding unit. Connecting files use arm-and-hand signals for communication.

Section III. TACTICAL MOTORIZED OR MECHANIZED MOVEMENTS

185. Rifle Platoon as a Motorized or Mechanized Advance Party

a. The organization of the company as a mounted advance guard is generally the same as an advance guard conducting a foot movement. The company commander sends out an advance party which precedes the advance guard minus by a sufficient time interval to permit deployment of the advance guard minus without serious interference from the enemy once the advance party gains contact. This time interval (approximately 5 minutes) varies depending on the enemy and the terrain and should not be so great as to prevent the advance guard minus from assisting the advance party if necessary. A forward observer normally accompanies the advance party to facilitate calling for and adjusting fires.

b. The advance party may or may not send out a point, depending primarily on the enemy resistance anticipated and the availability of vehicles for this purpose. If a point is established, the use of two or more vehicles is desirable to permit movement by bounds. The point precedes the advance party by approximately two minutes. This time interval also varies.

c. The point and advance party minus normally do not deploy elements to the flanks but rely on observation and reconnaissance

by fire for security. Maximum security of movement is obtained when lead elements move by successive positions rather than by continuous movement. If friendly reconnaissance elements are not operating to the front, reconnaissance by fire may be used to provide additional security and information of the enemy.

d. When enemy resistance is encountered, the actions of the advance party minus and point are similar to those described for a dismounted operation. Close coordination and control are required to insure that elements of the column do not close on one another. When the column halts pending development of the situation, to the front, vehicles are moved off the road to nearby concealment.

e. In mounted movement, a rifle platoon adequately reinforced with tanks may be designated as advance party. Because of their armor protection and firepower, tanks of the advance party normally lead though they are seldom separated from the advance party to act as point. Tanks and infantry must be positioned within the formation so as to permit close mutual support between them.

186. Rifle Platoon as a Part of a Motorized or Mechanized Flank Guard

a. The discussion of a dismounted flank guard in paragraph 182 is applicable to a mounted flank guard; however, a mounted flank guard, because of its ability to move elements to a critical area rapidly, has greater flexibility than a dismounted flank guard and may be assigned a larger area to cover. When assigned a large area, the flank guard blocks the most critical approaches and screens areas containing less critical approaches. Should an enemy threat develop in an area being screened, elements of the flank guard are shifted to the critical area as required.

b. When the rate of movement of the main body will permit, the platoons of the flank guard occupy a series of blocking positions. Such action provides strong flank security since most elements of the flank guard company are in position at all times. When the movement of the main body is rapid, continuous movement of the flank guard is based primarily on the area of responsibility, enemy threats on the flank, and the location of critical areas along the route.

187. Attack from March Column

The attack from march column differs from the coordinated attacked in that there is no time for detailed reconnaissance and planning. Leading elements attack swiftly and in mass. An attack from march column demands speed and aggressiveness. The initiative must be seized and kept. Lacking specific orders, the pla-

toon leader takes whatever action is required to carry out his assigned mission.

a. For speed and aggressiveness and to keep the initiative, elements are placed in the column in their expected order of employment. The tank and mechanized rifle platoons are distributed throughout the column in positions to lead the attack, maneuver to the flanks, and protect the column against enemy counterattacks. A tank platoon normally leads a mechanized rifle company which is an advance or flank guard for a larger unit.

b. The platoon leader places himself well forward in the column. He is accompanied by the 81-mm mortar forward observer and the commanders of any attached units. By following the leading squad, the platoon leader is in a position to keep abreast of the situation, to make prompt decisions, and to issue orders that quickly implement his decisions.

c. The 81-mm mortar section normally stays under company control, but may be attached to a platoon on a separate mission which is required to move beyond supporting distance. It is placed in the column where it can give immediate fire support to the leading platoon.

188. Attack From March Column Against Light Resistance

a. Against light resistance, tanks lead, using their speed, firepower, and shock action to confuse, overrun, and destroy the enemy. The platoon leaders of the leading tank and mechanized infantry elements work together, each commanding his own platoon, as part of the company task force.

b. When initial contact is made, the lead elements deploy with the mechanized infantry normally remaining mounted while the tank and mechanized infantry vehicular weapons take the enemy under fire. The company task force commander, normally immediately behind the lead platoon, makes a quick estimate and decision, usually resulting in an immediate maneuver of both tank and mechanized infantry elements. The base of fire in support of this maneuver should, whenever possible, consist of organic and supporting indirect fire weapons.

c. Tanks and mechanized infantry conducting the maneuver in an attack from march column function together the same as in any offensive action, with the exception that there is little time for planning and reconnaissance since speed and aggressiveness of attack are of prime importance. The maneuvering infantry element moves mounted as far as possible. The leading elements either overcome the resistance, or develop the situation in order that the remainder of the company may be employed if necessary to overcome the resistance.

189. Attack From March Column-Reduction of a Roadblock

Roadblocks consisting of abatis, craters, or other obstacles emplaced by the enemy normally will be covered by small arms and antitank fires. These obstacles usually will be located at defiles or other areas which severely restrict the maneuver of full-track vehicles. The most desirable action upon encountering a roadblock is to report its location and attempt to bypass it; however, this will seldom be possible and its reduction will generally require a dismounted infantry action. Tanks move into the best available positions from which they can deliver direct fire on the obstacle and its defenders. All available organic and supporting indirect fires are brought to bear on the forces defending the obstacle. Under cover of this direct and indirect fire, dismounted infantry moves by covered routes to a position to assault the defenders of the obstacle. Upon the signal of the maneuvering infantry element, the supporting fires are lifted or shifted and the assault is launched. Due to the danger of antitank mines located forward of the obstacles, care must be taken not to move vehicles too close to the obstacle prior to its clearance. Attacks of roadblocks are primarily infantry missions with the tanks supporting by fire. After elimination or withdrawal of the defender, the obstacle is cleared by infantrymen, supporting engineers, and, if necessary, the crews of tanks.

APPENDIX I

REFERENCES

AR 55–355	Military Traffic Management Regulation
AR 59–106	Air Transportation
AR 220–58	Organization and Training for Chemical, Biological, and Radiological Warfare
AR 320–5	Dictionary of United States Army Terms
AR 320–50	Authorized Abbreviations and Brevity Codes
AR 345–5	Personnel Management, Personnel Records
AR 600–30	Character Guidance Program
AR 735–35	Property Accountability
AR 750–5	Organization, Policies, and Responsibilities for Maintenance Operations
AR 750–8	Command Maintenance Inspections
FM 1–100	Army Aviation
FM 3–5	Chemical, Biological, and Radiological (CBR) Operations
FM 5–1	Engineer Troop Organizations and Operations
FM 6–20	Field Artillery Techniques
FM 7–11	Rifle Company, Infantry, Airborne Infantry, and Mechanized Infantry
FM 7–20	Infantry, Airborne Infantry, and Mechanized Infantry Battalions
FM 7–30	Infantry, Airborne and Mechanized Division Brigades
FM 8–35	Transportation of the Sick and Wounded
FM 17–1	Armor Operations; Small Units
FM 17–15	Tank Units, Platoon, Company, and Battalion
FM 20–32	Land Mine Warfare
FM 20–33	Ground Flame Warfare
FM 20–60	Battlefield Illumination
FM 21–5	Military Training
FM 21–6	Techniques of Military Instruction
FM 21–10	Military Sanitation
FM 21–18	Foot Marches
FM 21–20	Physical Training
FM 21–26	Map Reading
FM 21–30	Military Symbols

FM 21–40	Small Unit Procedures in Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Warfare
FM 21–41	Soldier's Handbook for Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Warfare
FM 21–48	Chemical, Biological, and Nuclear Training Exercises and Integrated Training
FM 21–50	Ranger Training
FM 21–60	Visual Signals
FM 21–75	Combat Training of the Individual Soldier and Patrolling
FM 21–76	Survival
FM 21–77	Evasion and Escape
FM 21–150	Hand-to-Hand Combat
FM 22–100	Military Leadership
FM 23–8	U.S. Rifle, 7.62-mm, M14
FM 23–25	Bayonet
FM 23–30	Grenades and Pyrotechnics
FM 23–32	3.5-Inch Rocket Launcher
FM 23–35	Pistols and Revolvers
FM 23–65	Browning Machinegun Caliber .50 HB M2
FM 23–67	Machinegun 7.62-mm, M60
FM 23–71	Rifle Marksmanship Course; Trainfire I
FM 23–82	106-mm Rifle, M40A1
FM 23–90	81-mm Mortar, M29
FM 24–18	Field Radio Techniques
FM 24–20	Field Wire and Field Cable Techniques
FM 25–10	Motor Transportation, Operation
FM 27–10	The Law of Land Warfare
FM 30–5	Combat Intelligence
FM 30–7	Combat Intelligence, Battle Group, Combat Command, and Smaller Units
FM 31–10	Barriers and Denial Operations
FM 31–15	Operations Against Irregular Forces
FM 31–25	Desert Operations
FM 31–30	Jungle Operations
FM 31–50	Combat in Fortified Areas and Towns
FM 31–60	River Crossing Operations
FM 31–70	Basic Cold Weather Manual
FM 31–71	Northern Operations
FM 31–72	Mountain Operations
FM 57–10	Army Forces in Joint Airborne Operations
FM 57–30	Airborne Operations
FM 57–35	Airmobile Operations
FM 57–100	The Airborne Division
FM 61–100	The Division

FM 100–5	Field Service Regulations; Operations
FM 101–31	Nuclear Weapons Employment (U)
DA Pam 39–1	Nuclear Weapons Employment
DA Pam 108–1	Index of Army Motion Pictures, Film Strips, Slides and Phono-Recordings
DA Pam 310-series	Military Publications Indexes (as applicable)
TC 101–1	Prediction of Fallout and Radiological Monitoring and Survey
TC 7–3	Functioning and Employment: Antipersonnel Weapon (Claymore) M18 and T48E1
TM 9–2810	Tactical Motor Vehicle
TM 21–301	Driver Selection, Training and Supervision Tracked Vehicles
TM 21–306	Manual for the Tracked Vehicle Driver
TM 57–210	Air Movement of Troops and Equipment
TM 57–220	Technical Training of Parachutists

APPENDIX II

COMBAT FORMATIONS

Section I. GENERAL

1. General

Squad and platoon combat formations are groupings of individuals and units for efficient tactical employment. Combat formations have the following characteristics in varying degrees: security, control, flexibility, and speed of reaction. The factors influencing the leader's decision as to the selection of any particular formation are the mission, terrain and weather, situation,

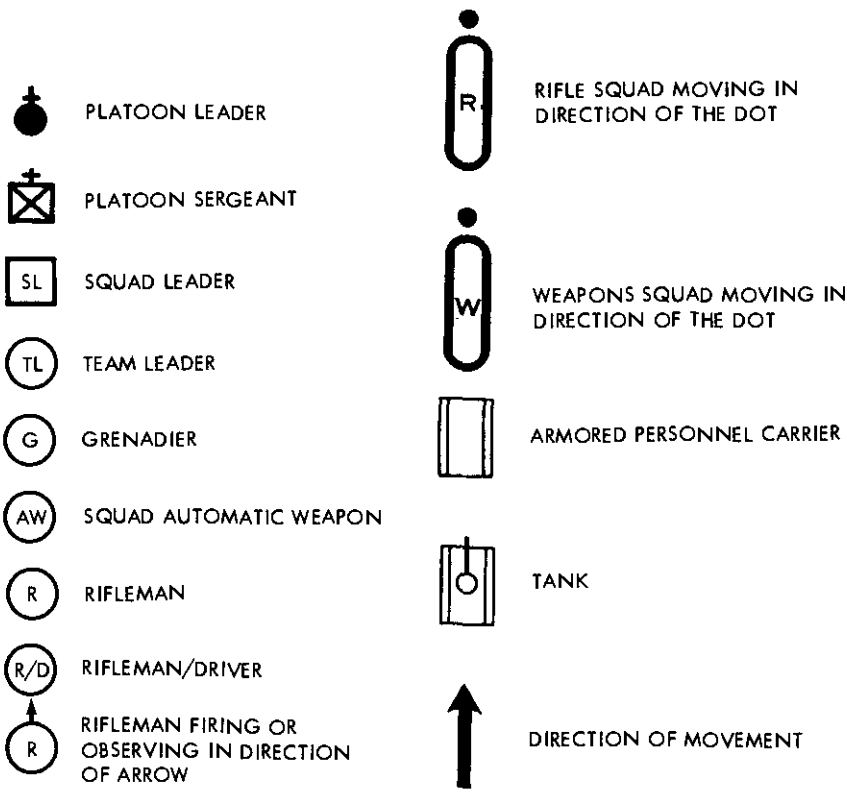


Figure 44. Symbols for text.

visibility, desired rate of movement, and degree of flexibility desired. This appendix is a guide for the infantry small unit leader in dismounted, mounted, and integrated combat formations. It covers the various types of squad and platoon formations and prescribes a uniform method of conducting drill in these formations over open ground and varied terrain. Figure 44 shows the symbols used in this appendix.

2. Relationship of Dismounted and Mounted Formations

The formation for a rifle platoon in APC's closely approximates dismounted platoon formations. When going from a mounted to a dismounted formation, the mounted formation should be the same as the anticipated dismounted formation to avoid delay and unnecessary movement. Similarly, when going from a dismounted to a mounted formation, the APC's should be brought forward to the squads in the same formation that the platoon is using on the ground. Tactical considerations and terrain, of course, may prevent the application of this technique.

3. Training

Training in dismounted squad and platoon formations should be conducted first on open terrain similar to a parade ground. When individuals and units have become proficient in assuming these formations, they are practiced on varied terrain to obtain practical training in the application of the formations on the terrain. Finally, squads and platoons practice integrated mounted and dismounted formations with tank units. On completing this training, units progress to tactical exercises involving aggressor forces, either actual or simulated.

Section II. DISMOUNTED SQUAD FORMATIONS

4. General

a. The rifle squad is organized for combat into two fire teams, ALFA and BRAVO.

b. The rifle squad combat formations are the squad file, squad column, and squad line. The squad column is the basic formation from which the others are derived. When the weapons squad moves as part of the platoon, it usually moves in column formation.

c. When moving as part of the platoon, the initial squad combat formation may be selected by the platoon leader. The squad leader may alter his formation to meet changes in the situation and terrain.

d. The squad leader places himself within the formation where he can best exercise control. The fire team leaders place themselves in the designated formations as directed by the squad leader. Other members of the squad take their appropriate positions based on the location of the fire team leader, or as he directs.

e. The squad leader controls the squad by oral commands, audible battlefield signals, arm-and-hand signals, and through his fire team leaders.

f. The squad maintains observation to the front, rear, and flanks. While moving or halted, squad members are responsible for observing in definite directions.

g. The distances between men within a formation vary, depending on visibility and terrain. While maximum dispersion is desirable to reduce vulnerability to direct and indirect fires, effective control must be maintained. When visibility is good, formations are more dispersed. During conditions of reduced visibility or in close terrain, distances between men are reduced.

h. In selecting or modifying squad formations to conform to a particular situation, or because of reduced strength, the following fundamentals generally apply:

(1) Fire team integrity is maintained.

(2) The fire team leader is located so as to facilitate control of the fire team, especially in its employment.

(3) The squad automatic weapons are located within each fire team to provide fire to the front, rear, and flanks of the squad.

(4) When changing from one combat formation to another, the automatic weapons should be required to move the least distance.

i. Changing from one combat formation to another is accomplished without halting the squad, following the above as a guide.

5. Squad File

(fig. 45)

The squad file is used for moving over terrain which is so restrictive that the squad cannot adopt a column formation, or when visibility is so reduced that control becomes extremely difficult. Deployment of the squad to the front or rear from this formation is not as easy as from the squad column.

6. Squad Column

The squad column is the primary formation for movement. Squads normally use this formation as part of the platoon. It provides good lateral and depth dispersion without sacrificing

1. LIMITED FIREPOWER TO FRONT AND REAR.
2. MAXIMUM FIREPOWER TO FLANKS.
3. FACILITATES CONTROL AND MOVEMENT.
4. COMMONLY USED IN DENSE TERRAIN AND REDUCED VISIBILITY WHEN SPEED AND CONTROL ARE ESSENTIAL.

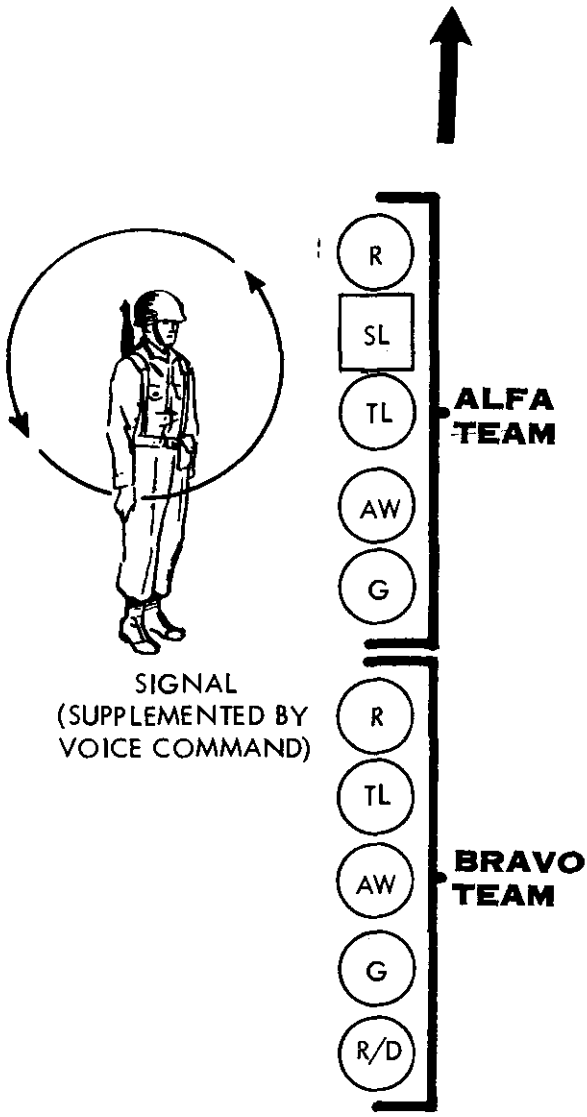


Figure 45. Squad file, ALFA leading.

control. In this formation, the squad can deliver a large volume of fire to the flanks but only a limited amount to the front. The squad column is a flexible formation which facilitates battle drill. Its two variations are fire teams in column and fire teams abreast.

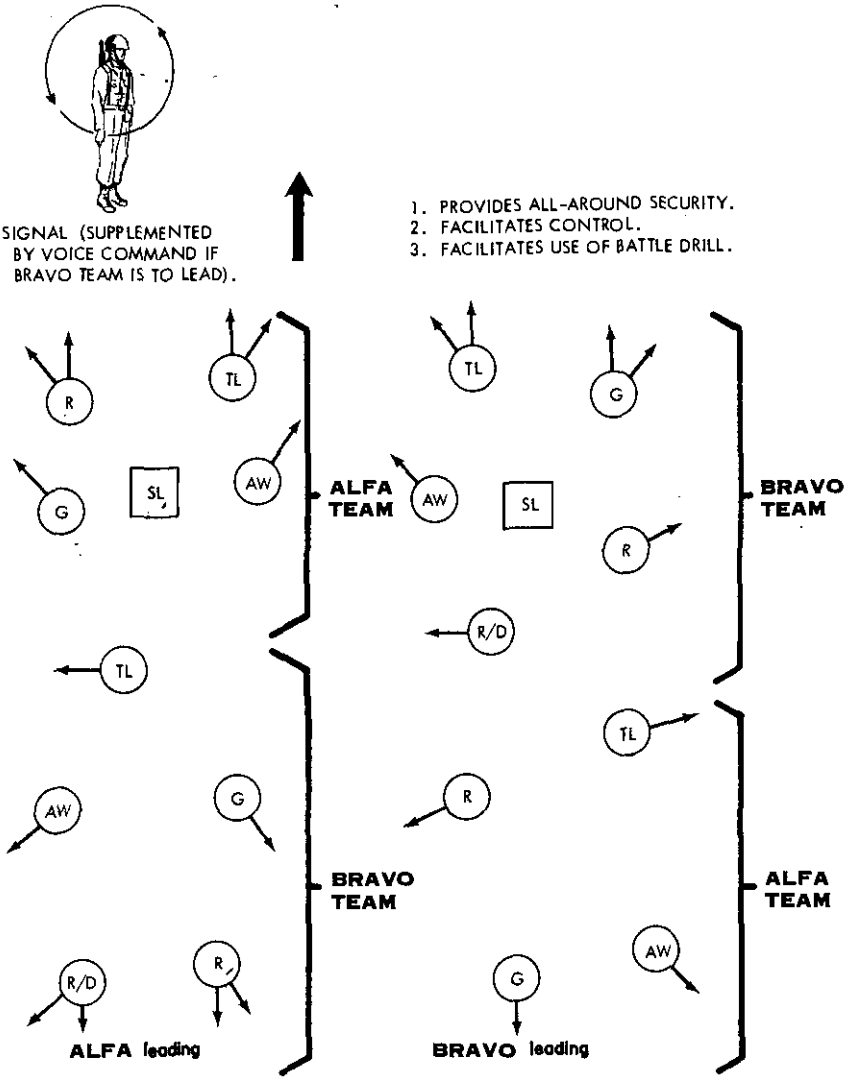
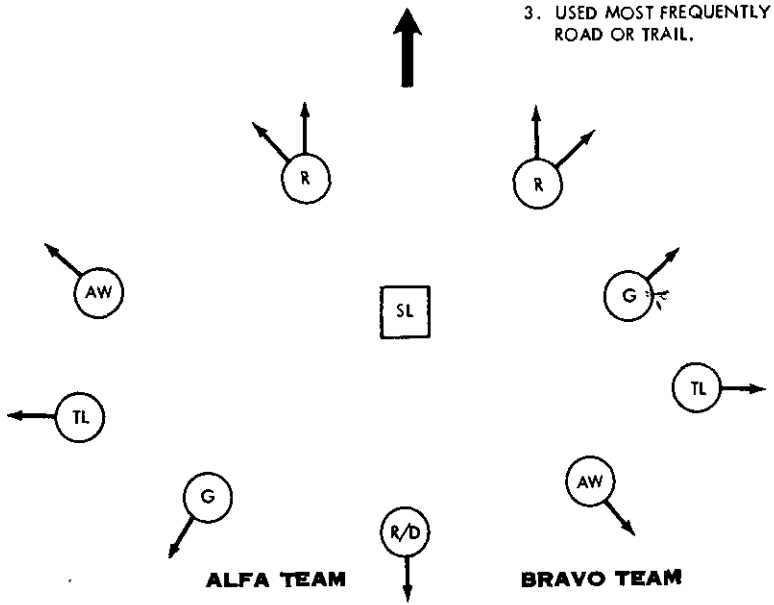
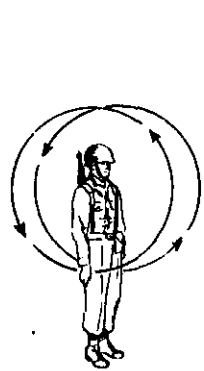


Figure 46. Squad column, fire teams in column.

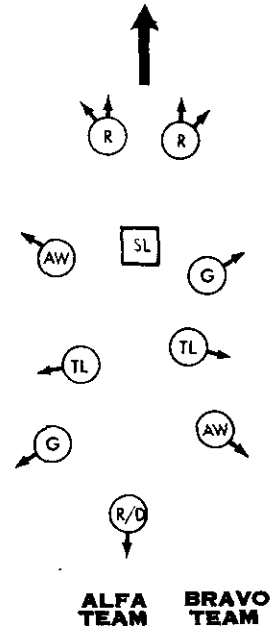
1. PROVIDES ALL-AROUND SECURITY.
2. FACILITATES DEPLOYMENT OF SQUAD ON EACH SIDE OF ROAD.
3. USED MOST FREQUENTLY ON A ROAD OR TRAIL.



SQUAD COLUMN, FIRE TEAMS ABREAST.



SIGNAL



MODIFIED SQUAD COLUMN, FIRE TEAMS ABREAST.

Figure 47. Squad column, fire teams abreast.

Both of these may be modified for greater dispersion, all-round security, and increased firepower to the front.

a. Squad Column With Fire Teams in Column (fig. 46). This variation is used most frequently in areas where maneuver of the rear (trailing) fire team is unrestricted. The teams may be closed or the rear team may follow at a specified distance. The squad column may be modified by the squad leader as necessary to conform to the terrain and to provide a greater capability to deliver fire immediately to either the front or rear. Such modification consists of the squad leader instructing those men in the center of the formation to move farther to the flanks. This variation is used most frequently when the squad is separated from other elements of the platoon.

b. Squad Column With Fire Teams Abreast (fig. 47). This variation of the squad column is for movement in areas where maneuver of the fire teams is restricted. It is used most frequently when the squad is moving along a road or trail. Here the enemy may have the road covered by fire which will frequently prevent soldiers moving across the road once the squad is under fire. Consequently, fire teams are placed abreast to facilitate their deployment on each side of the road without having anyone cross it. This formation may also be modified.

TO SIGNAL SQUAD LINE WHEN FIRE TEAMS ARE IN COLUMN, WAVE ARMS AS INDICATED IN DIRECTION REAR TEAM IS TO MOVE.

1. DIFFICULT TO CONTROL.
2. MAXIMUM FIREPOWER TO THE FRONT.
3. USED FOR THE ASSUALT AND CROSSING SHORT OPEN AREAS.

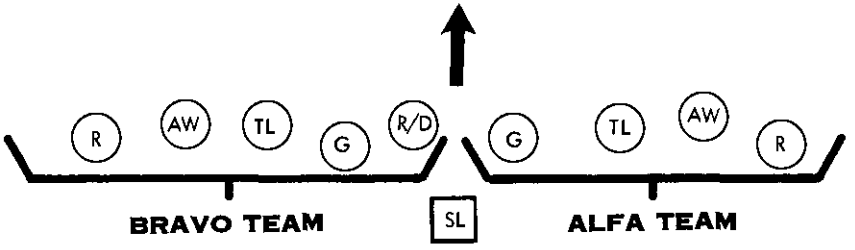


Figure 48. Squad line.

7. Squad Line

(fig. 48)

The squad line is the basic assault formation of the squad and provides for the delivery of maximum fires to the front. Specific locations of men within the formation may be changed by the squad leader as desired. In the assault, the squad leader designates a base fire team, usually the team that has been leading.

Section III. DISMOUNTED PLATOON FORMATIONS

8. General

a. The company commander ordinarily decides on the company formation and allows the platoon leader to select the formation for his platoon.

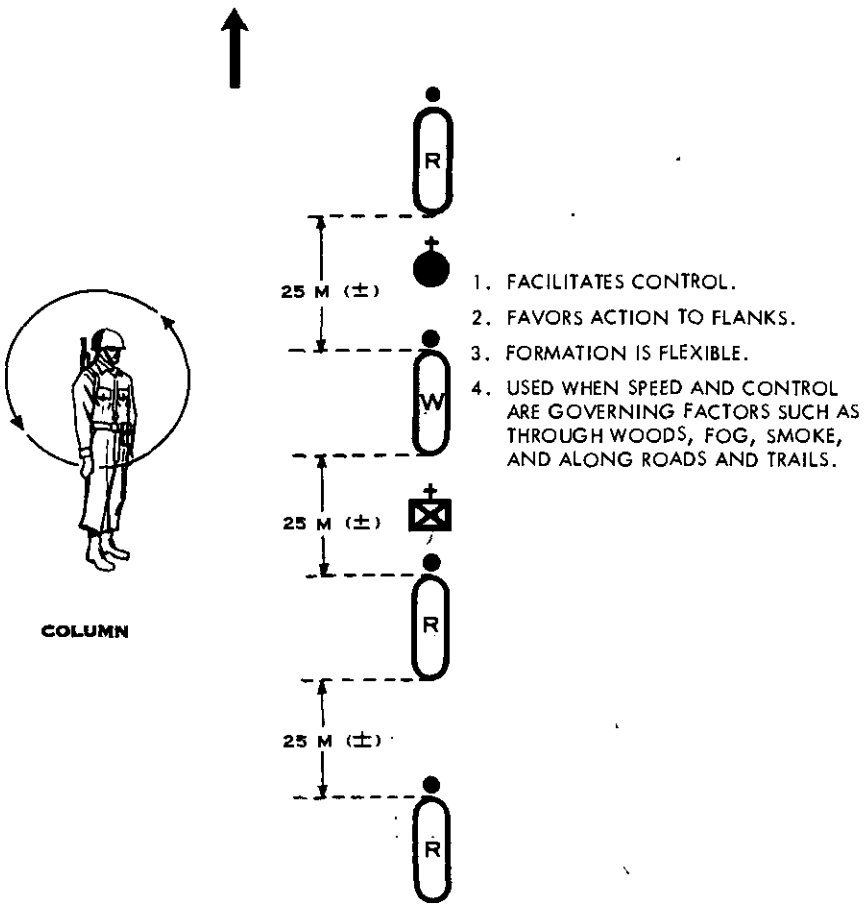
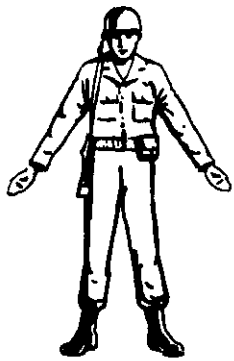


Figure 49. Platoon column.



WEDGE

1. FACILITATES CONTROL.
2. PROVIDES ALL-AROUND SECURITY.
3. FORMATION IS FLEXIBLE.
4. USED WHEN ENEMY SITUATION IS OBSCURE AND TERRAIN AND VISIBILITY REQUIRE DISPERSION.

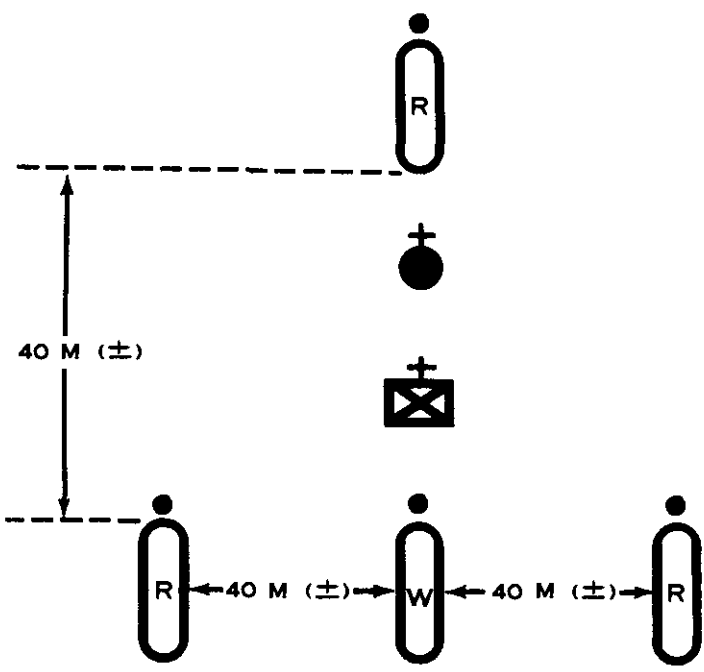
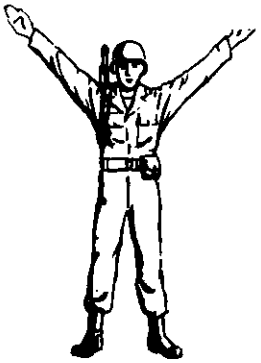
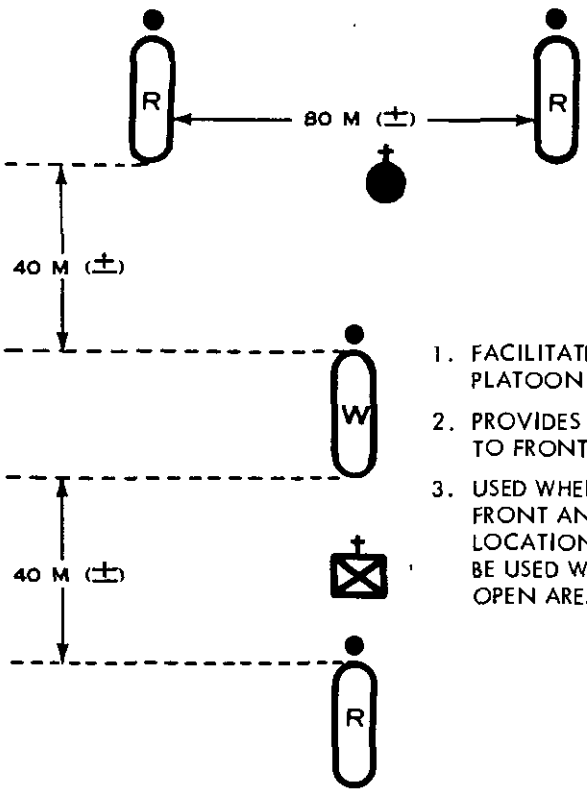


Figure 50. Platoon wedge.



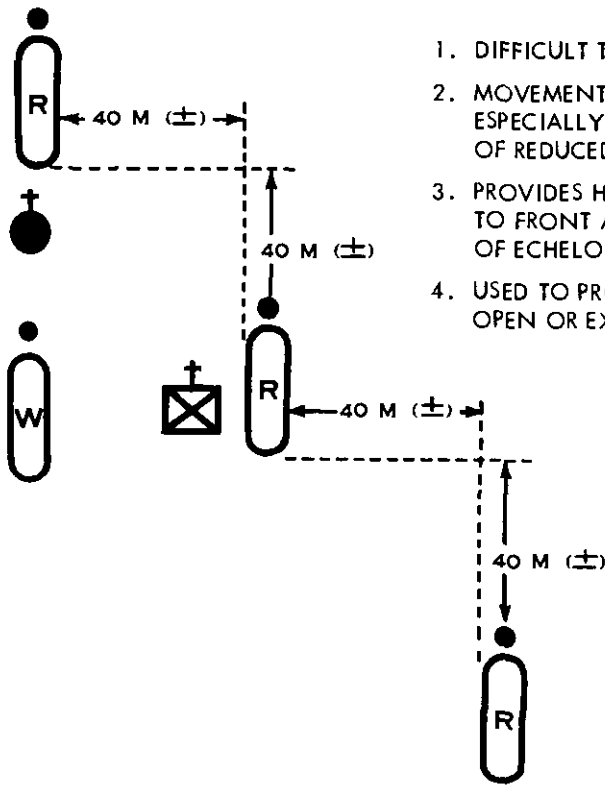
VEE



1. FACILITATES MOVEMENT INTO PLATOON LINE.
2. PROVIDES EXCELLENT FIREPOWER TO FRONT AND FLANKS.
3. USED WHEN THE ENEMY IS TO THE FRONT AND HIS STRENGTH AND LOCATION ARE KNOWN. MAY BE USED WHEN CROSSING LARGE OPEN AREAS.

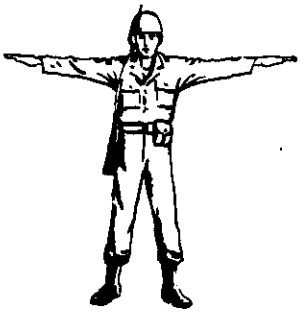
Figure 51. Platoon vee.

ECHELON RIGHT (LEFT)
(LOWER ARM EXTENDED ON SIDE TOWARD WHICH THE UNIT IS TO BE ECHELONED.)



1. DIFFICULT TO CONTROL.
2. MOVEMENT IS SLOW, ESPECIALLY UNDER CONDITIONS OF REDUCED VISIBILITY.
3. PROVIDES HEAVY FIREPOWER TO FRONT AND IN DIRECTION OF ECHELON.
4. USED TO PROTECT AN OPEN OR EXPOSED FLANK.

Figure 52. Platoon echelon.



PLATOON LINE

1. DIFFICULT TO CONTROL.
2. MAXIMUM FIREPOWER TO FRONT.
3. USED DURING THE ASSAULT, MOPPING-UP, AND CROSSING SHORT OPEN AREAS.

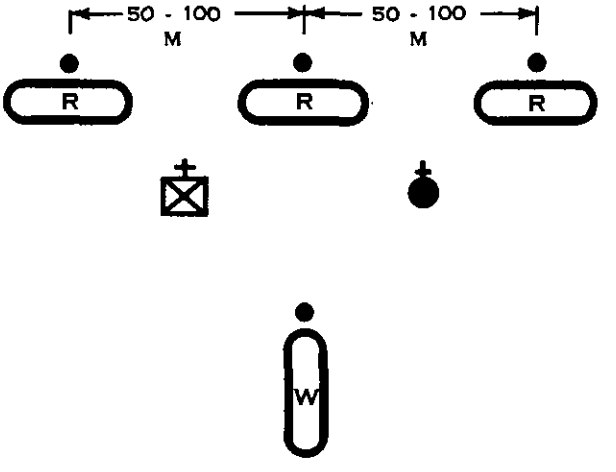


Figure 53. Platoon line.

b. In the platoon formation, as in the squad, each squad within the platoon observes to its front, flanks, and rear. Squad leaders observe and control their squads, staying within sight of the platoon leader if possible. The leader of the last squad is responsible for keeping the formation closed up. The platoon leader goes where he can best control the platoon. The platoon sergeant assists him in the control of the platoon. His position is not fixed.

c. Unless otherwise specified, the base squad for the platoon formations is determined as follows. When three squads are abreast, the center rifle squad is the base squad; in all other formations, the leading or right leading rifle squad is the base squad. Change of base squad takes place upon completion of formation change. The squad formations within the platoon

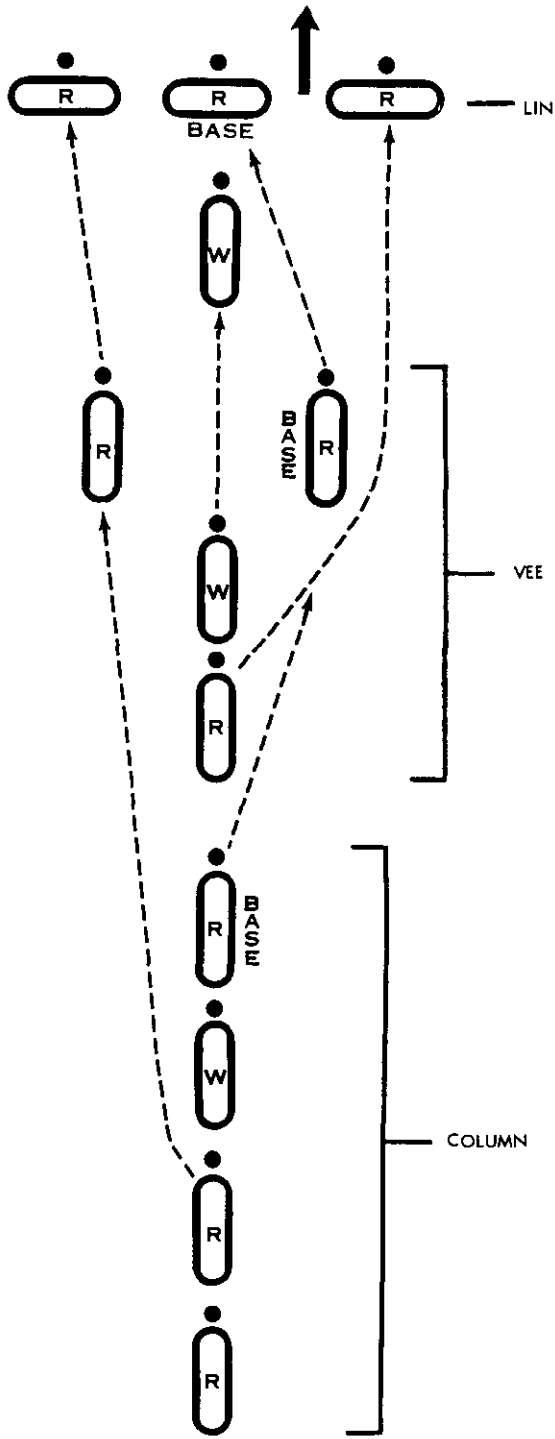


Figure 54. Dismounted platoon formation changes.

formation may vary. The platoon leader places the weapons squad where it can best accomplish its mission of close fire support and antitank protection.

d. The distance between men and squads may be increased or decreased and the men staggered right of left according to the situation and terrain.

9. Formations

The usual formations employed by the platoon leader are the column (fig. 49), wedge (fig. 50), vee (fig. 51), echelon (fig. 52), and line (fig. 53).

10. Formation Changes
(fig. 54)

The platoon will constantly change formations to take advantage of the terrain and to accomplish the assigned mission. Formation changes should be accomplished without halting. The platoon leader will control formation changes by arm-and-hand signals and the designation of the base squad.

Section IV. MOUNTED FORMATIONS

11. General

a. Mounted platoon combat formations are used during the movement from the attack position to the line of departure and beyond. The formations are flexible. Mounted formations for the mechanized rifle platoon are similar to those for the tank platoon. The type of terrain and available cover and concealment govern the position of each vehicle in the formation.

b. The platoon leader moves where he can best control his platoon. This normally places him in the lead vehicle.

c. In selecting the formation to accomplish his mission, the platoon leader considers the enemy, control, security, firepower, terrain, and visibility. As the platoon advances, he may change formations to fit the situation. During movement in formation, platoon security is achieved by giving each vehicle commander a definite area or sector of observation. When an attack is expected from a known direction, formations are chosen that permit rapid concentration of fire in the direction of known enemy locations.

d. The weapons squad vehicle is placed in a central location to permit its rapid deployment. To place this squad on the flank or at the rear will cause delay in its dismounted employment. The positions of the weapons squad may be changed to conform

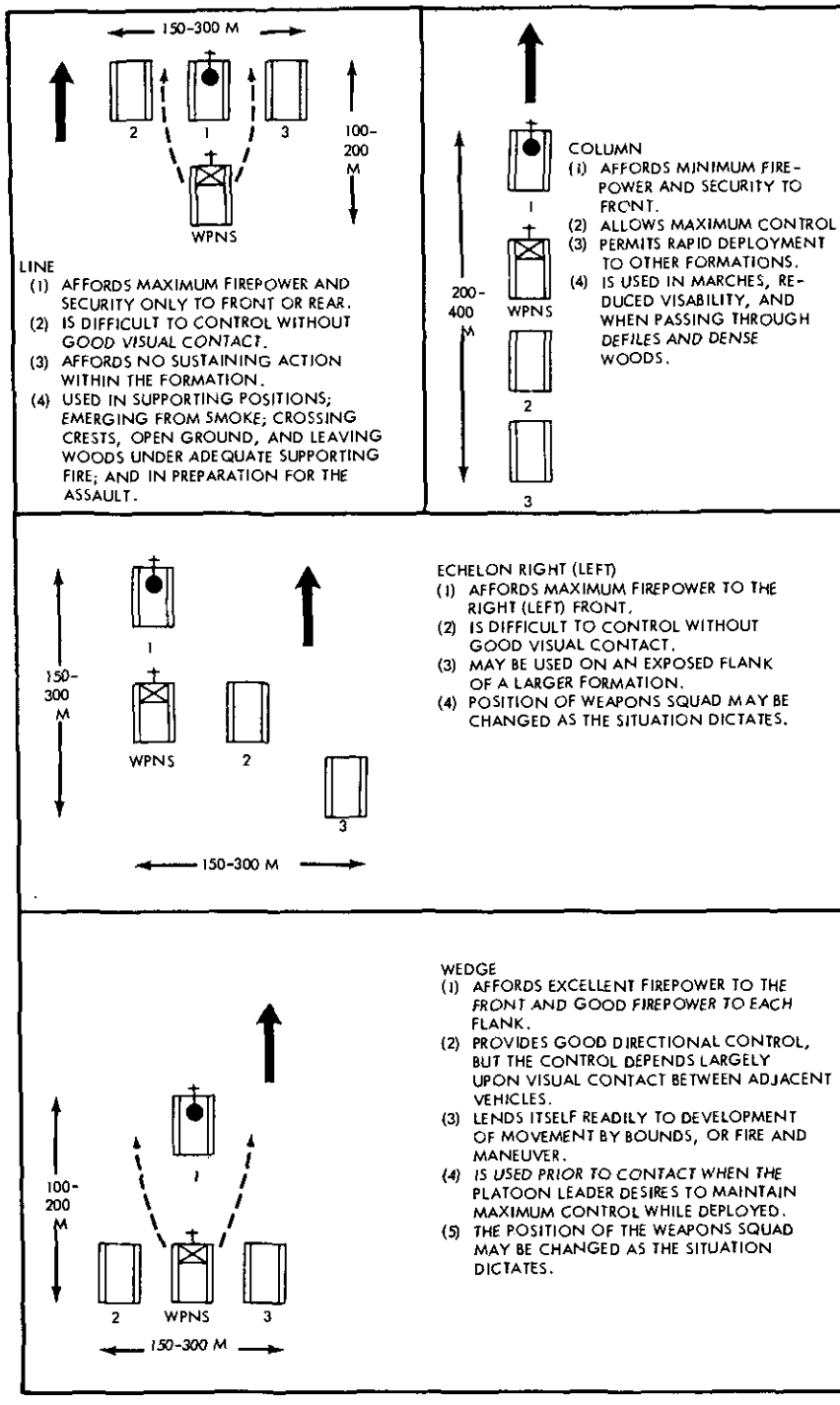

150-300 M
2
1
3
100-200 M
WPNS
LINE
(1) AFFORDS MAXIMUM FIREPOWER AND SECURITY ONLY TO FRONT OR REAR.
(2) IS DIFFICULT TO CONTROL WITHOUT GOOD VISUAL CONTACT.
(3) AFFORDS NO SUSTAINING ACTION WITHIN THE FORMATION.
(4) USED IN SUPPORTING POSITIONS; EMERGING FROM SMOKE; CROSSING CRESTS, OPEN GROUND, AND LEAVING WOODS UNDER ADEQUATE SUPPORTING FIRE; AND IN PREPARATION FOR THE ASSAULT.
1
200-400 M
WPNS
2
3
COLUMN
(1) AFFORDS MINIMUM FIREPOWER AND SECURITY TO FRONT.
(2) ALLOWS MAXIMUM CONTROL.
(3) PERMITS RAPID DEPLOYMENT TO OTHER FORMATIONS.
(4) IS USED IN MARCHES, REDUCED VISABILITY, AND WHEN PASSING THROUGH DEFILES AND DENSE WOODS.
1
150-300 M
WPNS
2
3
150-300 M
ECHELON RIGHT (LEFT)
(1) AFFORDS MAXIMUM FIREPOWER TO THE RIGHT (LEFT) FRONT.
(2) IS DIFFICULT TO CONTROL WITHOUT GOOD VISUAL CONTACT.
(3) MAY BE USED ON AN EXPOSED FLANK OF A LARGER FORMATION.
(4) POSITION OF WEAPONS SQUAD MAY BE CHANGED AS THE SITUATION DICTATES.
1
100-200 M
2
WPNS
3
150-300 M
WEDGE
(1) AFFORDS EXCELLENT FIREPOWER TO THE FRONT AND GOOD FIREPOWER TO EACH FLANK.
(2) PROVIDES GOOD DIRECTIONAL CONTROL, BUT THE CONTROL DEPENDS LARGELY UPON VISUAL CONTACT BETWEEN ADJACENT VEHICLES.
(3) LENDS ITSELF READILY TO DEVELOPMENT OF MOVEMENT BY BOUNDS, OR FIRE AND MANEUVER.
(4) IS USED PRIOR TO CONTACT WHEN THE PLATOON LEADER DESIRES TO MAINTAIN MAXIMUM CONTROL WHILE DEPLOYED.
(5) THE POSITION OF THE WEAPONS SQUAD MAY BE CHANGED AS THE SITUATION DICTATES.

Figure 55. Mounted platoon formations. Vehicles should be dispersed as much as possible within the formation.

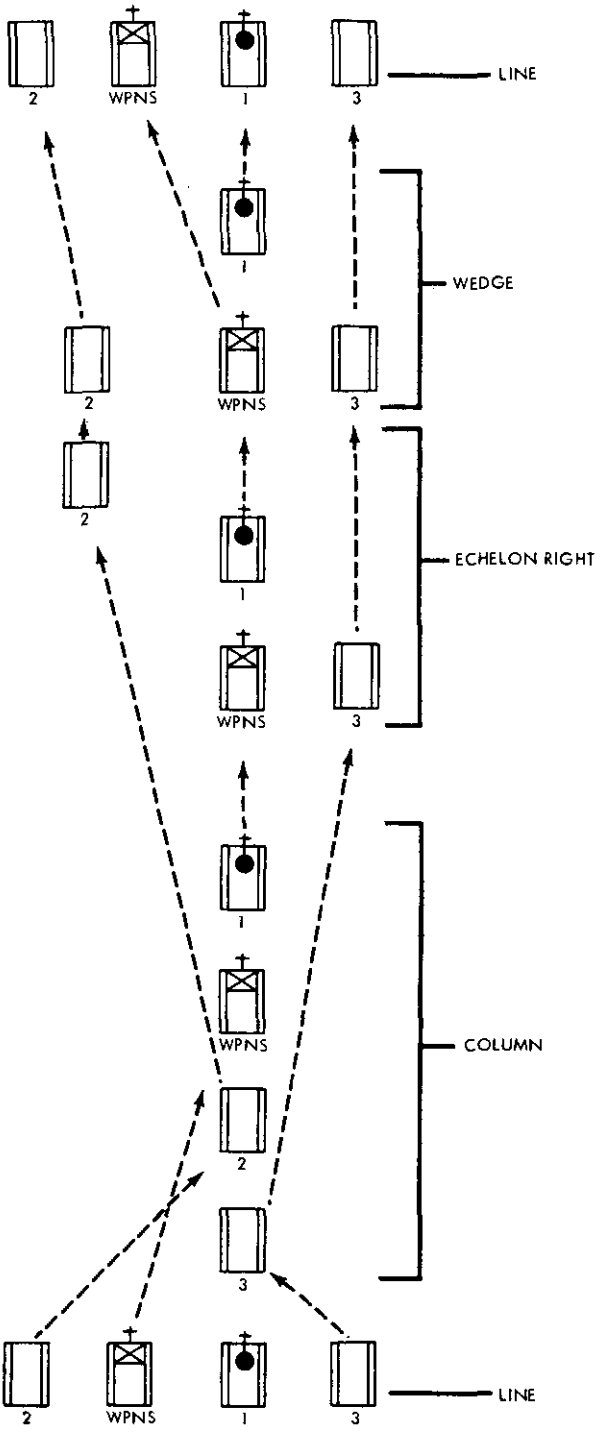


Figure 56. Mounted platoon formation changes.

to the situation. For example, if squads are not to dismount until on or just short of the FCL, and the platoon is in line formation, the weapons squad probably should be centrally located in the line.

12. Formations

The line, column, echelon, and wedge formations shown in figure 55 are the normal formations employed by the mounted platoon. The vee formation is not shown because it is seldom used in conjunction with tank formations.

13. Mounted Platoon Formation Changes

Changing from one mounted formation to another must be accomplished smoothly, in minimum time, and without loss of momentum. Techniques for changing from one mounted formation to another are shown in figure 56. The base vehicle is the platoon leader's vehicle in formation changes.

Section V. FORMATIONS WITH TANKS

14. General

The mechanized rifle platoon habitually operates with tanks as a part of the company. The infantry and airborne infantry platoons will frequently operate with tanks in the conduct of offensive action. Paragraphs 15, 16, and 17 are concerned with both mounted and dismounted formations with tanks. When operating with tanks, the infantry leader adopts the combat formation consistent with the formation of the tanks and the situation. He must anticipate changes in tank formations and adopt the formation suitable to the situation. The infantry must not interfere with the maneuver of the tanks. Intermingling of APC's and tanks is avoided.

15. Squad Formations With Tanks

a. When operating with tanks, the squad leader may adopt squad column formations to take advantage of the tank firepower and the protection of the tank itself. Figure 57 depicts a situation of this nature. The squad leader (his squad being part of a rifle platoon) adopts the squad column (fire teams abreast) until moving into the line formation for the final phase of the attack.

b. Modified squad column formations are especially useful when enemy tank-hunter teams are active and the tanks with dismounted infantry are moving through wooded areas, high grass, or rough terrain. Figure 58 shows a situation of this nature.

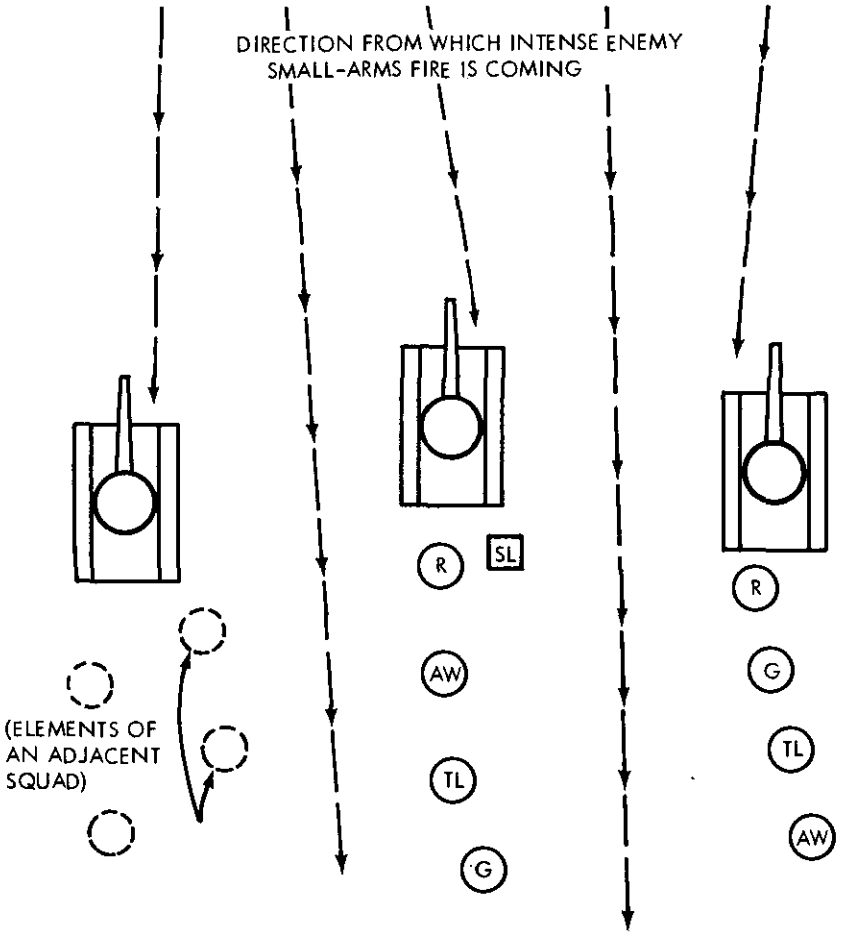


Figure 57. Example of squad column in formation with tanks. Adapted to take advantage of protection afforded by tanks. Rifleman/driver not shown in this formation.

c. When infantry is operating with tanks in the final phases of an attack, the squad line is normally adopted. It conforms to the basic assault formation employed by the tanks (the line), and it enables dismounted infantry to move in an integrated formation with tanks. Figure 59 depicts a situation of this nature.

d. A squad advancing in a direction generally parallel to a nearby advancing tank platoon which is echeloned to counter an enemy threat may adopt a line formation to take advantage of the physical protection which the tanks on his flank provide. Figure 60 depicts a situation of this nature.

16. Dismounted Platoon Formations With Tanks

a. When operating with tanks the platoon leader may adopt the column formation to take advantage of the firepower of the tanks and the protection of the tanks themselves. Figure 61 depicts a situation of this nature.

b. The wedge formation is frequently employed by tank units. The platoon leader may employ the wedge formation for the dismounted rifle platoon for better coordination as shown in figure 62.

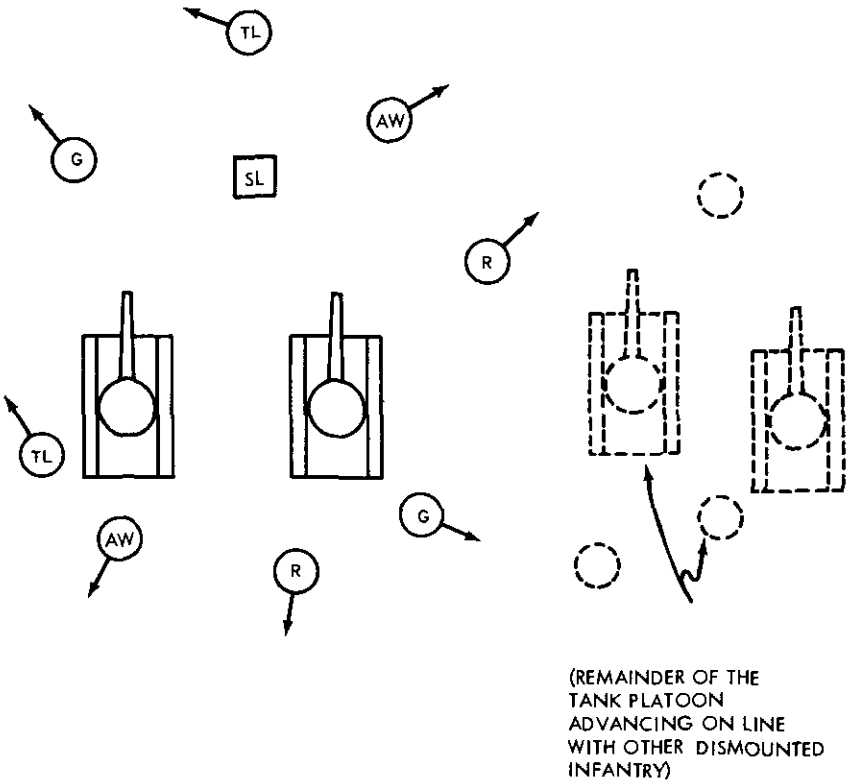


Figure 58. Example of modified squad column formation (fire teams in column) for protection of tanks. Rifleman/driver not shown in this formation.

c. The echelon may be employed to protect the flanks of tank units and for better protection for the dismounted platoon as in figure 63.

d. The platoon line formation is employed in conjunction with tanks as in figure 64 during assault.

17. Mounted Platoon Formations With Tanks

The formations used by the mounted platoon depends on the employment technique adopted for the tanks and mechanized

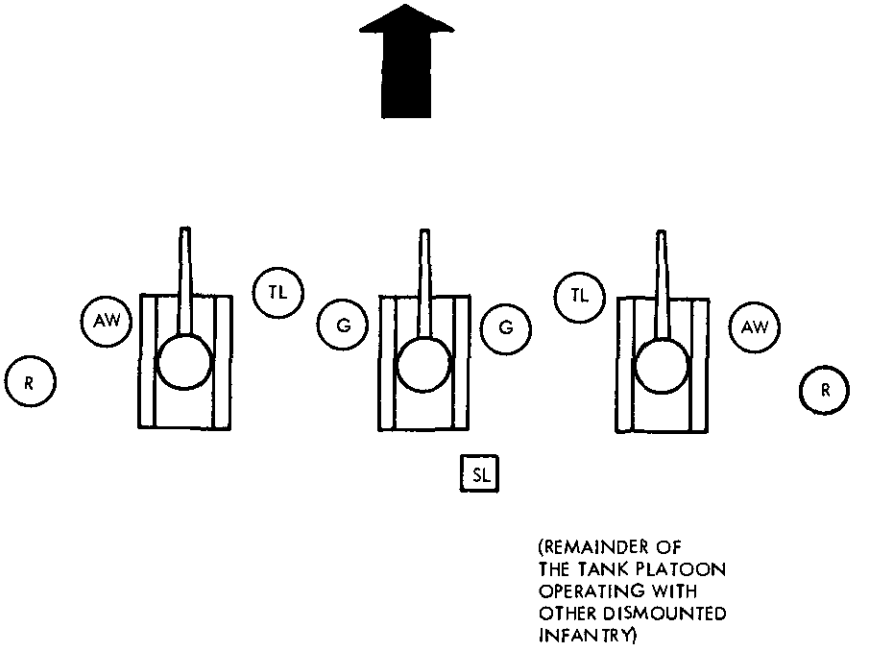


Figure 59. Squad in line formation operating with a portion of a tank platoon in line. Rifleman/driver not shown in this formation.

infantry. When the mounted mechanized infantry platoon follows the tanks by bounds, the mechanized platoon will use the formation best suited for the accomplishment of the mission. The mechanized platoon leader keeps uppermost in his mind the em-

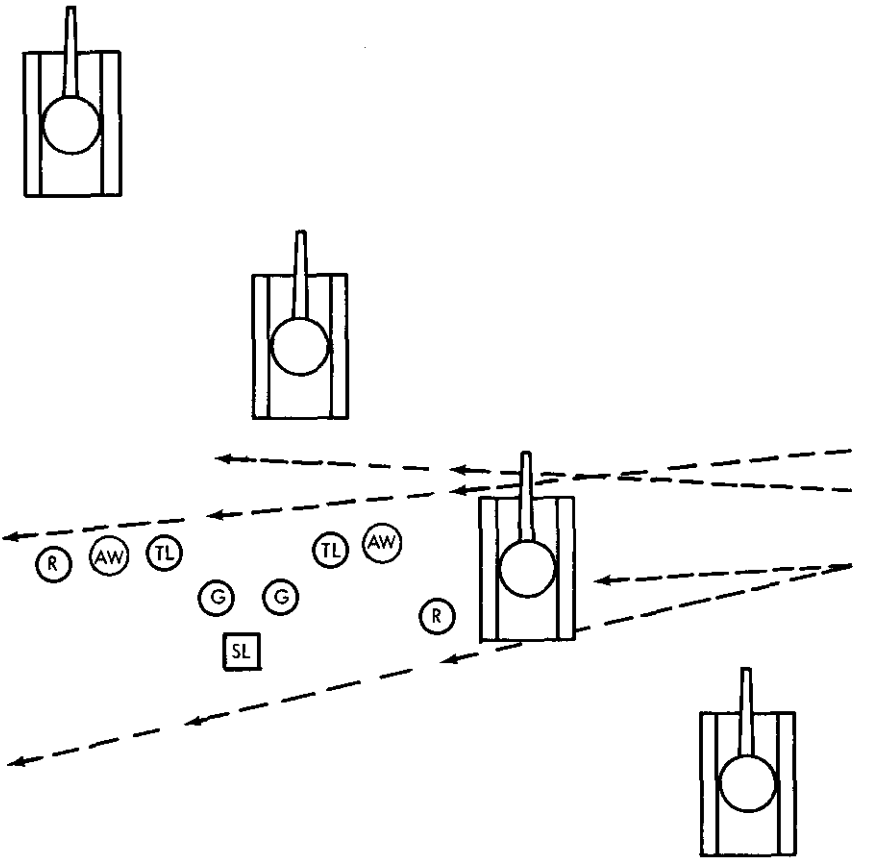


Figure 60. Example of a line formation adopted to take advantage of a tank platoon formation echeloned to counter an enemy threat from the right front. Rifleman/driver not shown in this formation.

ployment of his unit when it dismounts, the formation at the dismount area conforming to his plan of assault on the objective. Figure 65 depicts the normal mounted formations used with tanks. The vee formation is rarely used in integrated formations.

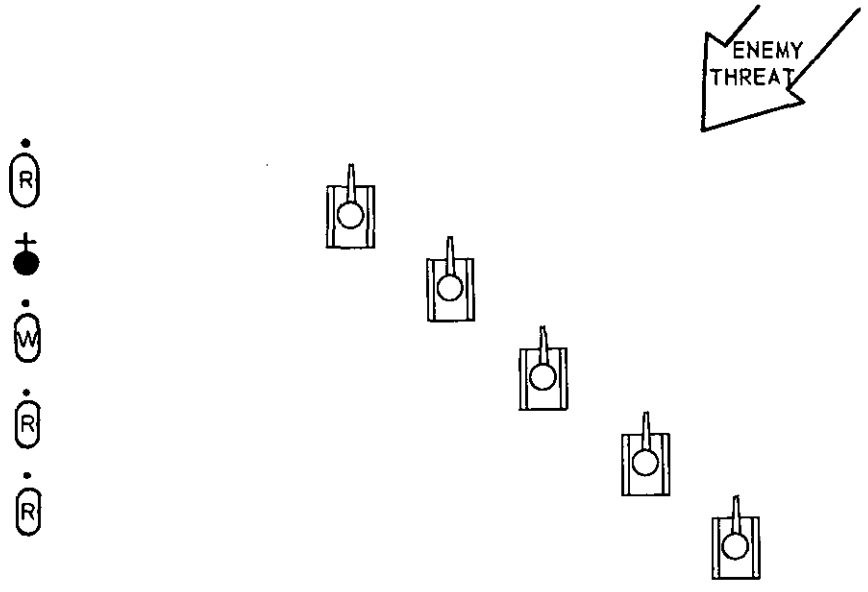


Figure 61. Example of a situation in which the platoon leader is able to take up a column formation because of the echelon of tanks to his flank (schematic).

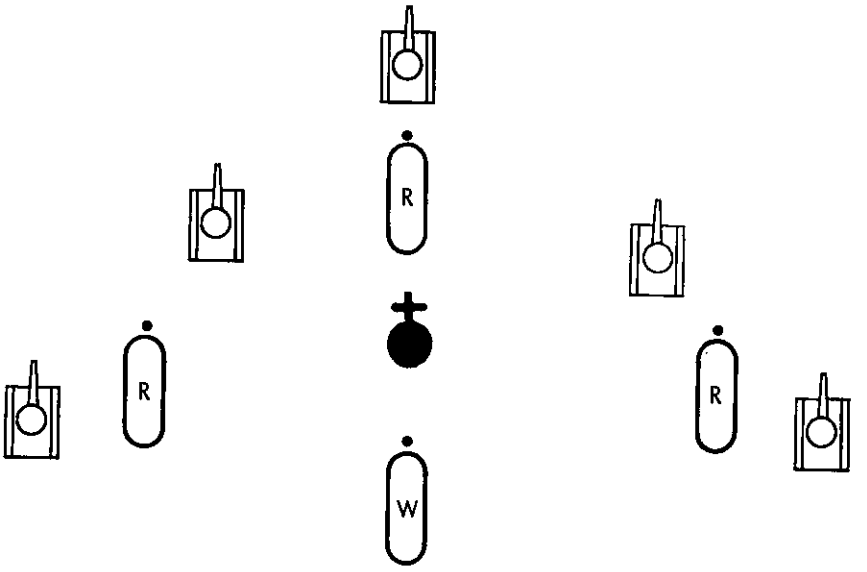


Figure 62. Tank platoon in wedge formation moving with a dismounted rifle platoon which has also adopted a wedge formation for better coordination with tanks (schematic).

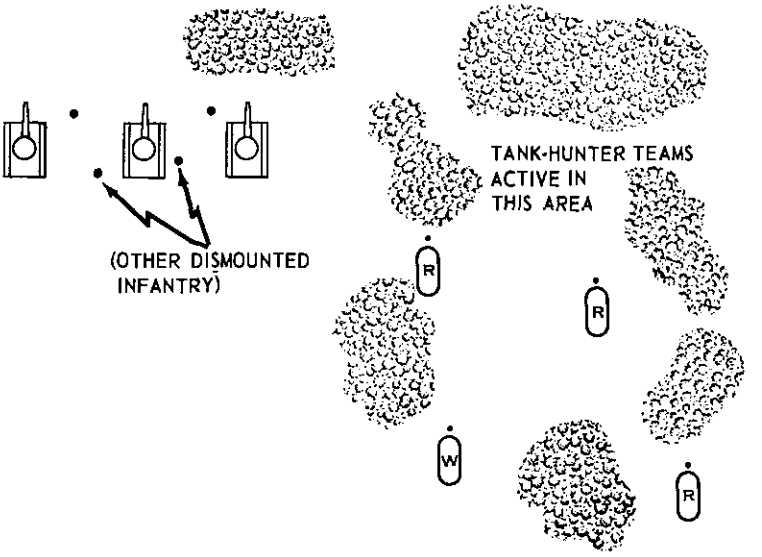


Figure 63. Platoon echelon adopted to provide protection for tanks on the flanks of a larger formation (schematic).

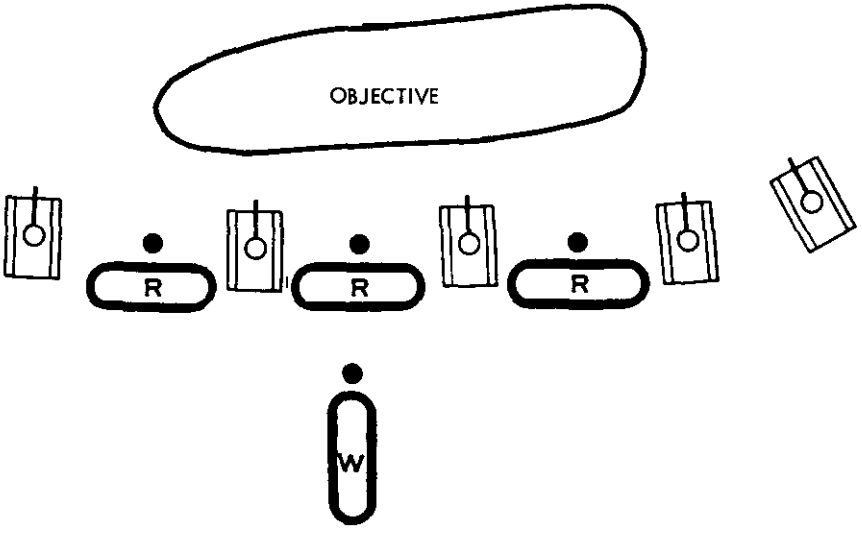


Figure 64. Dismounted rifle platoon and tank platoon in integrated line formation for the assault (schematic).

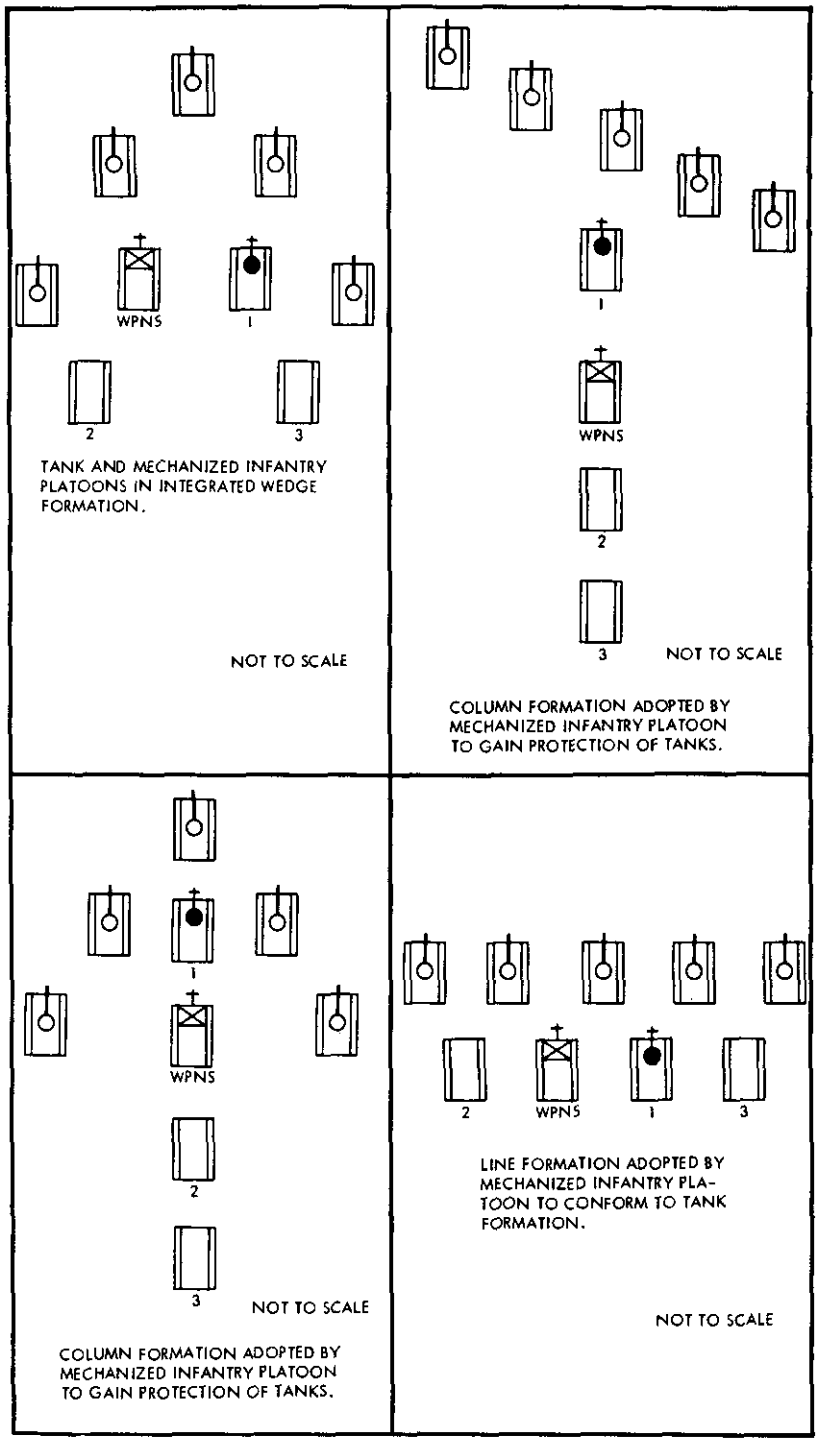


Figure 65. Typical mounted infantry-tank formations (schematic). Vehicles should be as dispersed as possible within the formation.

APPENDIX III

BATTLE DRILL

1. General

Units in combat are often surprised or faced with unexpected opportunities. Battle drill has been developed to allow the leader to react quickly and correctly to any such situation without issuing lengthly orders. In using battle drill, leaders make an estimate of the situation and an immediate decision, then uses arm-and-hand signals (or voice or radio) to indicate the desired movement. At squad and platoon level, battle drill results in immediate fire and movement or fire and maneuver (par. 28). In mechanized operations, platoon leaders often rely almost exclusively on battle drill. The symbols in figure 44 apply to this appendix.

2. Squad Teams

a. The organization of the rifle squad into two fire teams provides the squad leader with two elements to execute fire and movement or fire and maneuver. Essentially, one fire team is the maneuver element, while the other is the fire support element. The role of each fire team may change during the conduct of any particular action. For example, if the maneuver element is prevented by enemy action or terrain from closing with the enemy, it assumes the fire support role to cover the advance of the other team, which then becomes the maneuver element.

b. Although the rifle squad is organized into two teams, this organization does not prevent the squad leader from altering the organization of his maneuver and fire support elements to conform to a specific situation. When the terrain offers excellent firing positions and more firepower is required in the fire support element than can be provided by one fire team, the squad leader may designate both automatic weapons, one or two grenadiers, and one of the fire team leaders to act as the fire support element, with the remainder of the squad acting as the maneuver element. However, such a subdivision of the squad takes time to accomplish and loses some of the squad's precision and interchangeability of fire teams.

3. Fire Support Element

a. The fire support element assists the maneuver element in its advance toward the enemy position by engaging all known or suspected targets. It continues its fire until masked by the maneuver element (fig. 66).

b. This element is aggressive in its action. While delivering fire on the enemy, it continues to move closer to the objective if such action is possible without reducing the volume of fire. Such movement is normally accomplished through individual rushes. When the maneuver element masks its fires, the fire support ele-

Figure 66. Battle drill (maneuver right).

ment moves forward to join in the assault or assist in consolidation.

4. Maneuver Element

a. The mission of the maneuver element is to close with and destroy or capture the enemy. It advances and assaults under the close fire support of the fire support element.

b. The maneuver element's principle job is to maintain the advance toward the enemy. It uses available cover and concealment to the maximum, creeping and crawling when necessary. Depending upon the terrain and effectiveness of the supporting fire, the maneuver element advances by fire team movement, fire and movement within the team or creeping and crawling. Regardless of how it moves, it must continue to advance. If terrain permits, the maneuver element may be able to move forward, under cover and concealment, to positions within hand grenade range of the enemy. See figure 66.

5. Control of the Squad

a. The squad leader is assisted in the control of the squad by the fire team leaders. The organization of the squad into fire teams in no way prevents the squad leader from directly controlling individual squad members. The squad and fire team leaders display positive and forceful leadership when executing battle drill.

b. The squad leader gives the necessary command or signal to execute the desired battle drill action. Fire team leaders initiate the action directed by the squad leader. If necessary, they repeat the command signal. Fire team leaders act as fighter-leaders, controlling their fire teams primarily by example. Fire team members base their actions on their fire team leader. Throughout the action, fire team leaders exercise such positive control as is necessary to insure that their fire teams function as directed. The squad leader locates himself where he can best control and influence the action. Normally, he will move with the maneuver element.

c. In a situation in which the squad is brought under effective small arms fire while advancing, certain actions are automatic. Thos soldiers in position to return fire do so immediately. Members of the leading fire team move by individual rushes, or by creeping and crawling, to positions generally abreast of their fire team leader and attempt to gain fire superiority over the enemy (fig. 67). The squad leader quickly makes an estimate of the situation, decides his course of action,

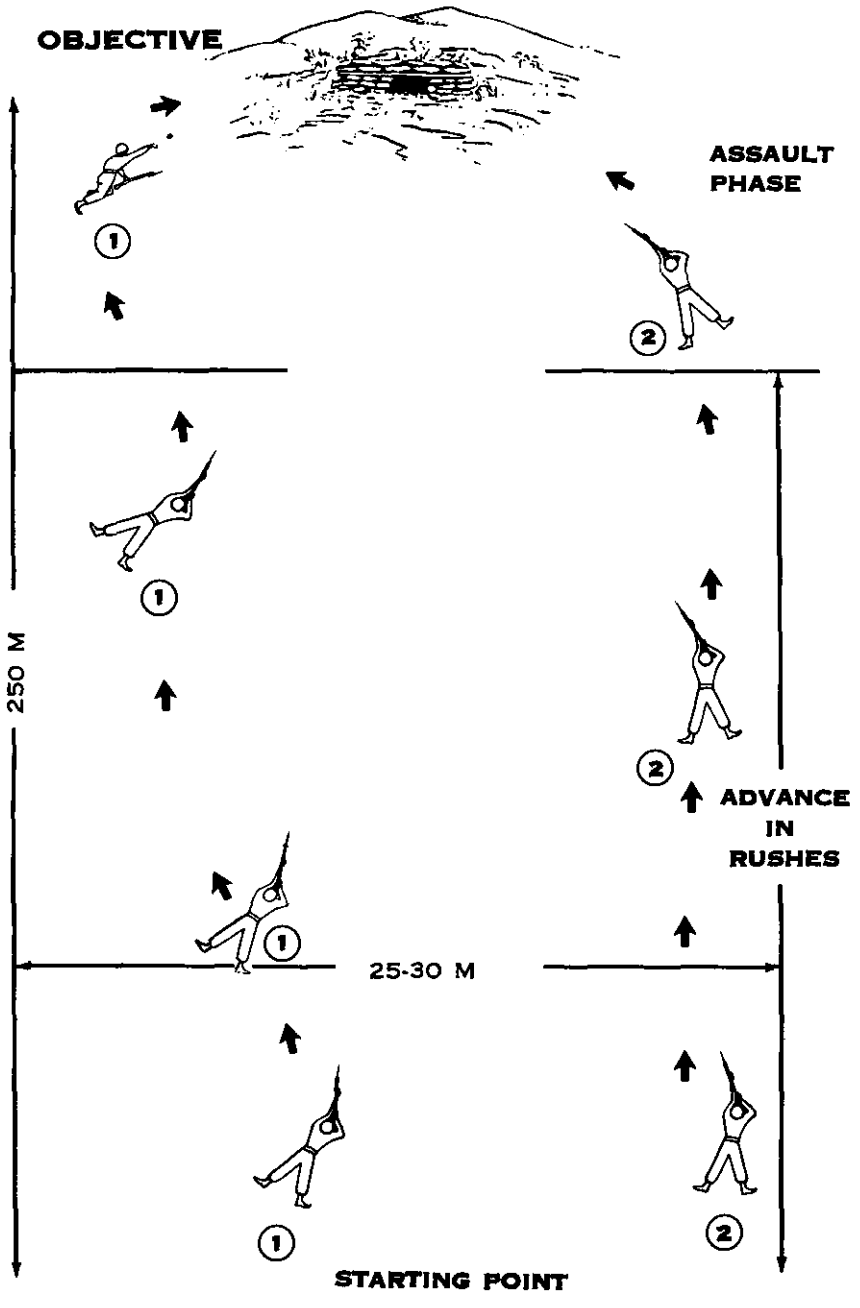


Figure 67. Elementary fire and movement.

and signals his plan. His plan provides for gaining fire superiority before attempting to maneuver. In other situations, both fire teams may be required to gain fire superiority, permitting move-

ment only by individual rushes or creeping and crawling (fig. 68). The fire team leader of the maneuver element initiates the action of his fire team by moving in the desired direction. He selects the route to be followed, based on the command or signal of the squad

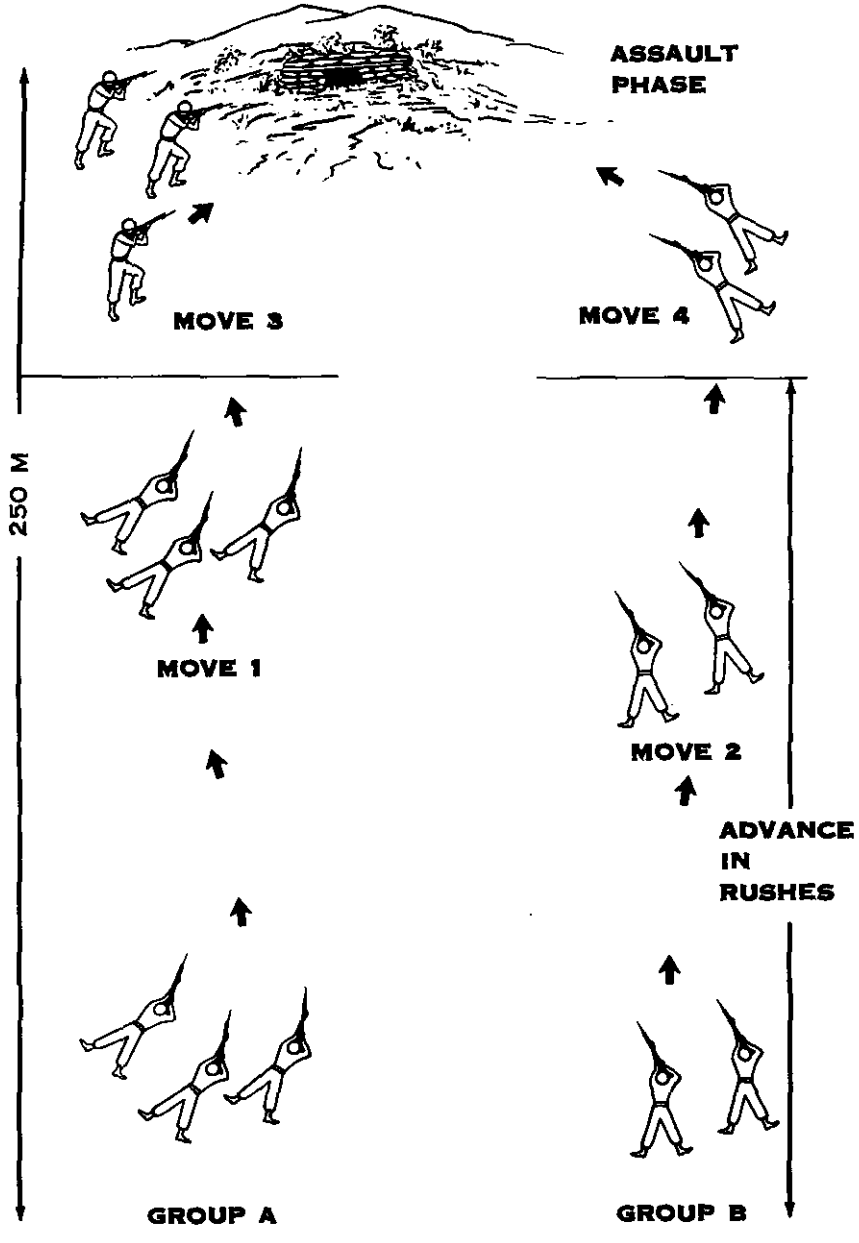


Figure 68. Team fire and movement.

leader. Other members of his fire team base their action on him, moving by individual rushes or creeping and crawling as necessary.

6. Squad Battle Drill

a. Squad battle drill can be grouped into three basic battle drill actions—maneuver left, maneuver right, and maneuver front. These maneuvers are executed from the squad formations.

b. The maneuver used in a particular situation is decided by the squad leader, based on his rapid estimate of the situation. He quickly considers such factors as the terrain (covered and concealed routes available for maneuver; positions available for fire support), enemy dispositions and capabilities, his own dispositions, and the courses of action open to him. When the resistance is isolated and has exposed flanks, the squad leader attempts to move his maneuver element over a covered and concealed route to strike the enemy resistance in the flank or rear. When this is not possible, a frontal attack requiring fire and movement may be required.

7. Battle Drill From Squad Column (Fire Teams in Column)

To execute maneuver right, maneuver left, or maneuver to the front, the squad leader gives the appropriate command and signal, and the squad executes a maneuver similar to that in figures 69 and 70.

8. Battle Drill From Squad Column (Fire Teams Abreast)

To execute maneuver right, maneuver left, or maneuver to the front, the squad leader gives the appropriate command and signal, and the squad executes a maneuver similar to that in figures 71 and 72.

9. Battle Drill From Other Squad Formation

a. Battle drill can be executed from the squad line formation in a manner similar to that depicted in maneuver front. Either fire team may be used as the maneuver element initially, depending primarily on the terrain and enemy dispositions. The maneuver executed will usually be a maneuver front, since disengaging a fire team to maneuver to either flank will normally be very difficult.

b. Battle drill can be executed from the squad file formation in a manner similar to that depicted by fire teams abreast (figs. 71 and 72).

10. Platoon Battle Drill

The platoon employs battle drill when it encounters unexpected enemy resistance. There are three basic maneuvers—maneuver

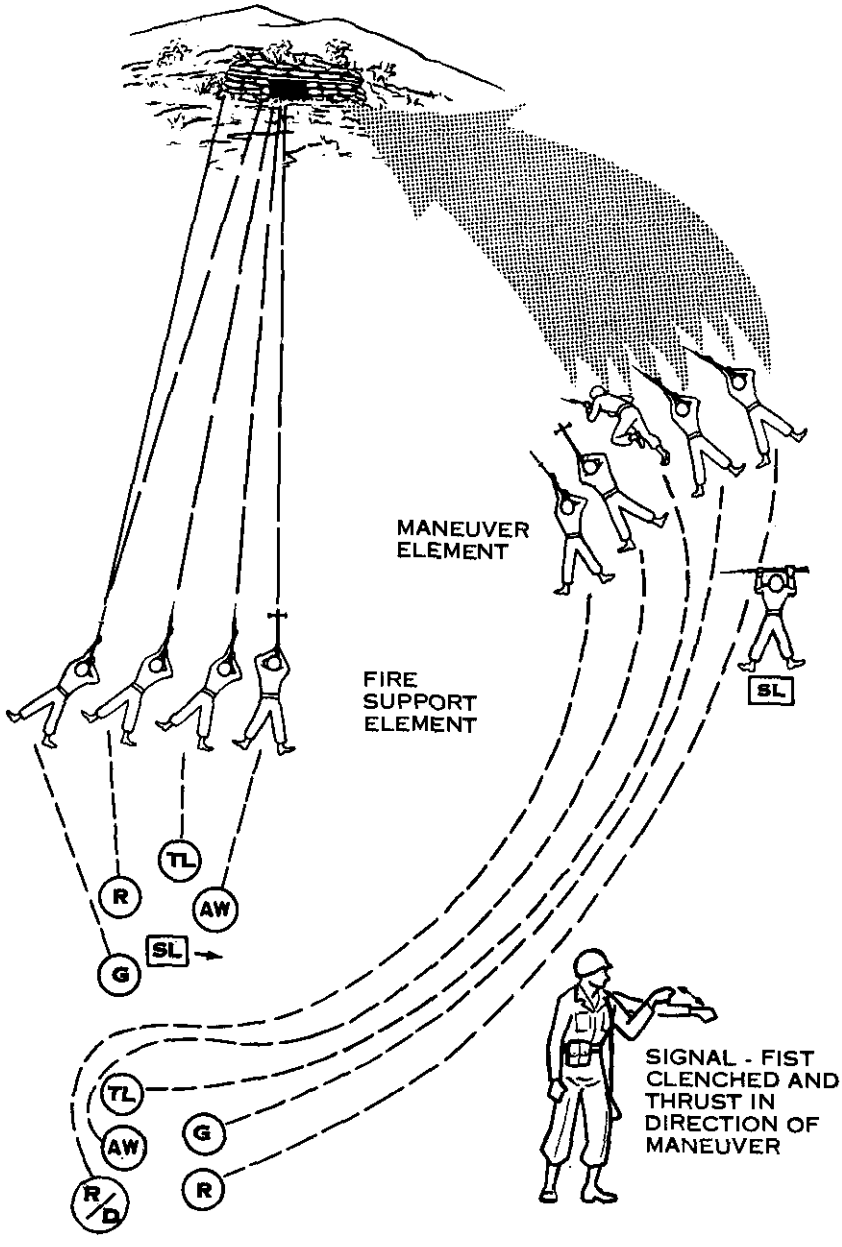


Figure 69. Maneuver right from squad column, fire teams in column.

left, maneuver right, and a maneuver front. These maneuvers can be executed from any of the platoon formations.

a. Maneuver Left or Right. To execute maneuver left or right, the platoon leader commands and signals MANEUVER LEFT

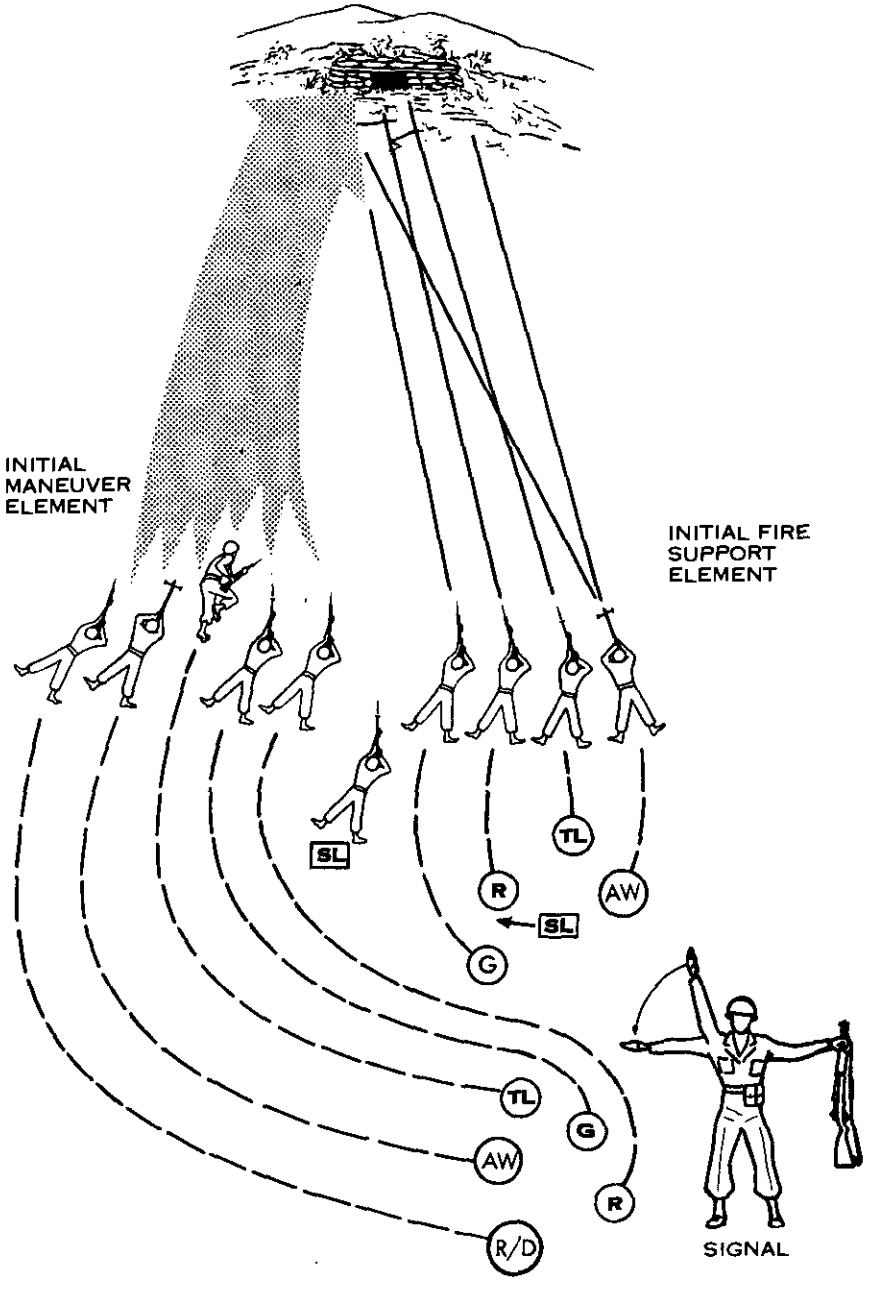


Figure 70. Maneuver front, left, from squad column, fire teams in column.

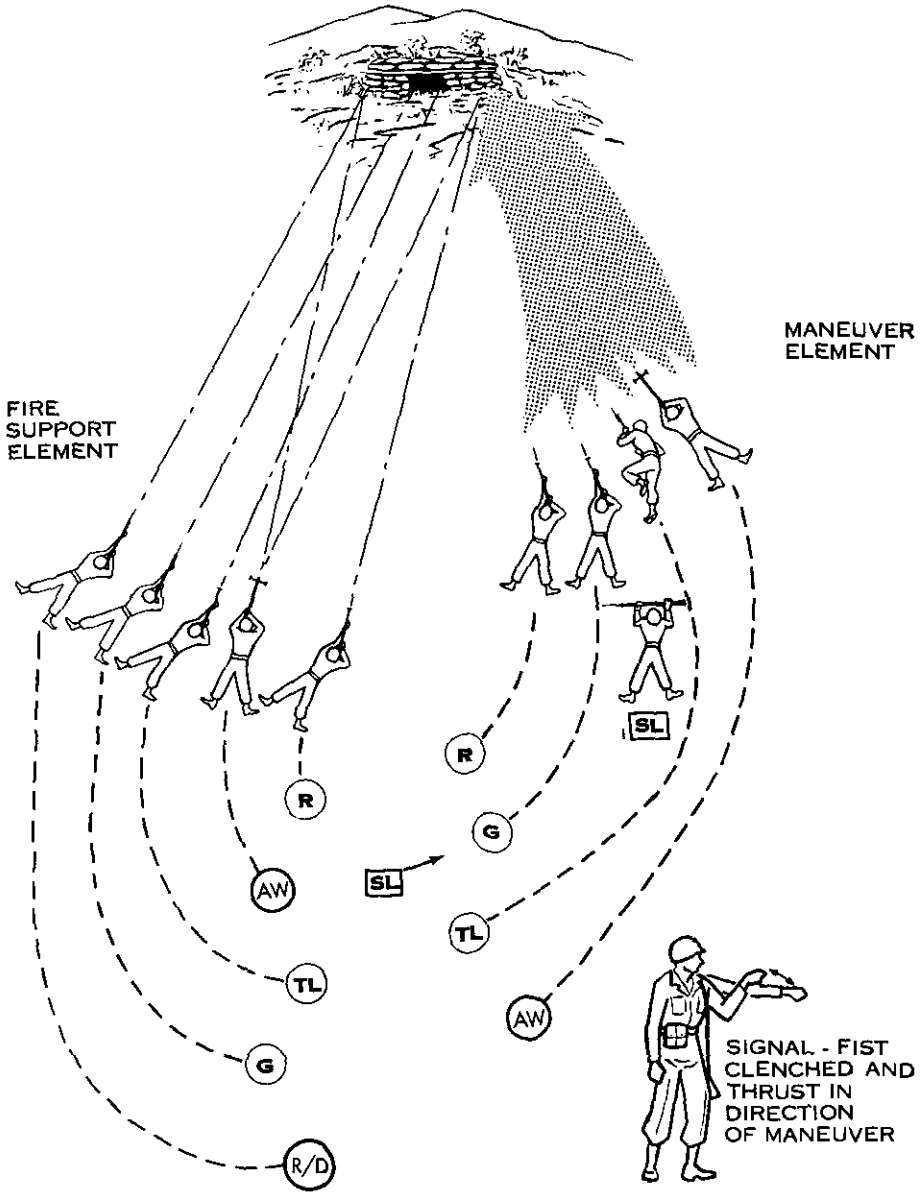


Figure 71. Maneuver right from squad column, fire teams abreast.

(RIGHT); the platoon executes maneuvers similar to those in figures 73, 74, and 75.

b. Maneuver Front. To execute maneuver front, the platoon leader commands MANEUVER FRONT, and the platoon executes the maneuver as shown in figure 76. The maneuver element in this case normally employs fire and movement.

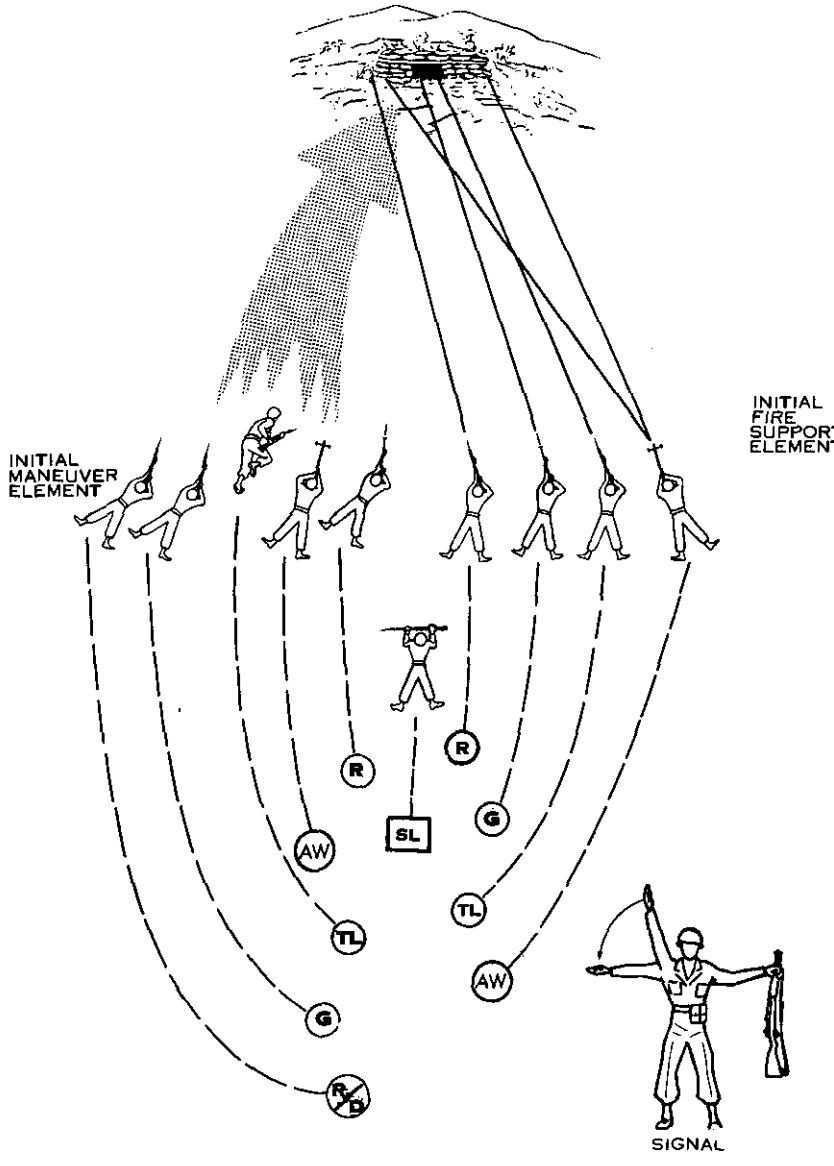


Figure 72. Maneuver front, left, from squad column, fire teams abreast.

11. Rifle Squads

The rifle squad leaders, upon receiving a signal or order from the platoon leader, control their squads by signaling and commanding CHANGE DIRECTION, or FOLLOW ME and set the example by moving in the desired direction. The squads move in formation under cover, or by fire and maneuver, until they are

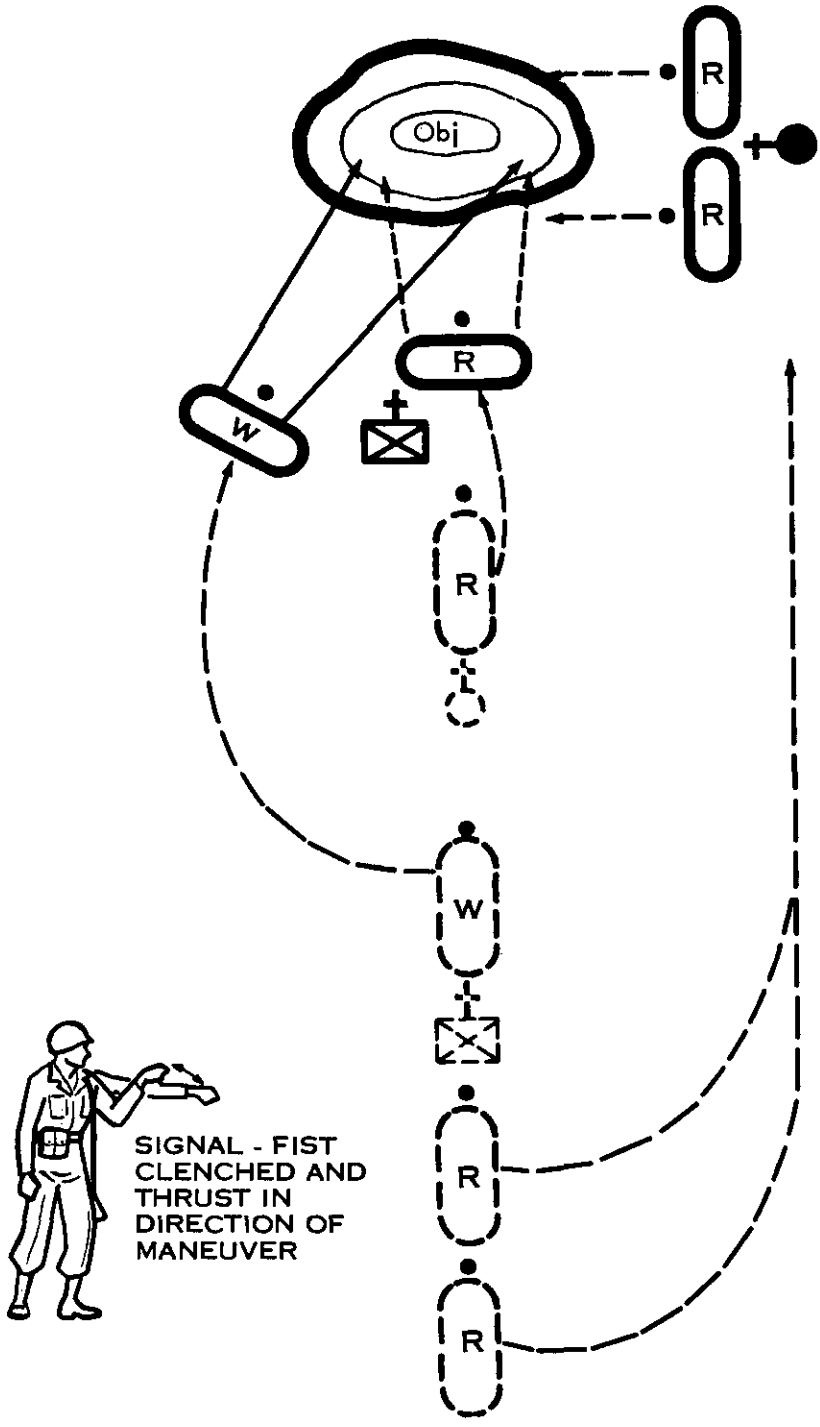


Figure 73. Maneuver right from platoon column.

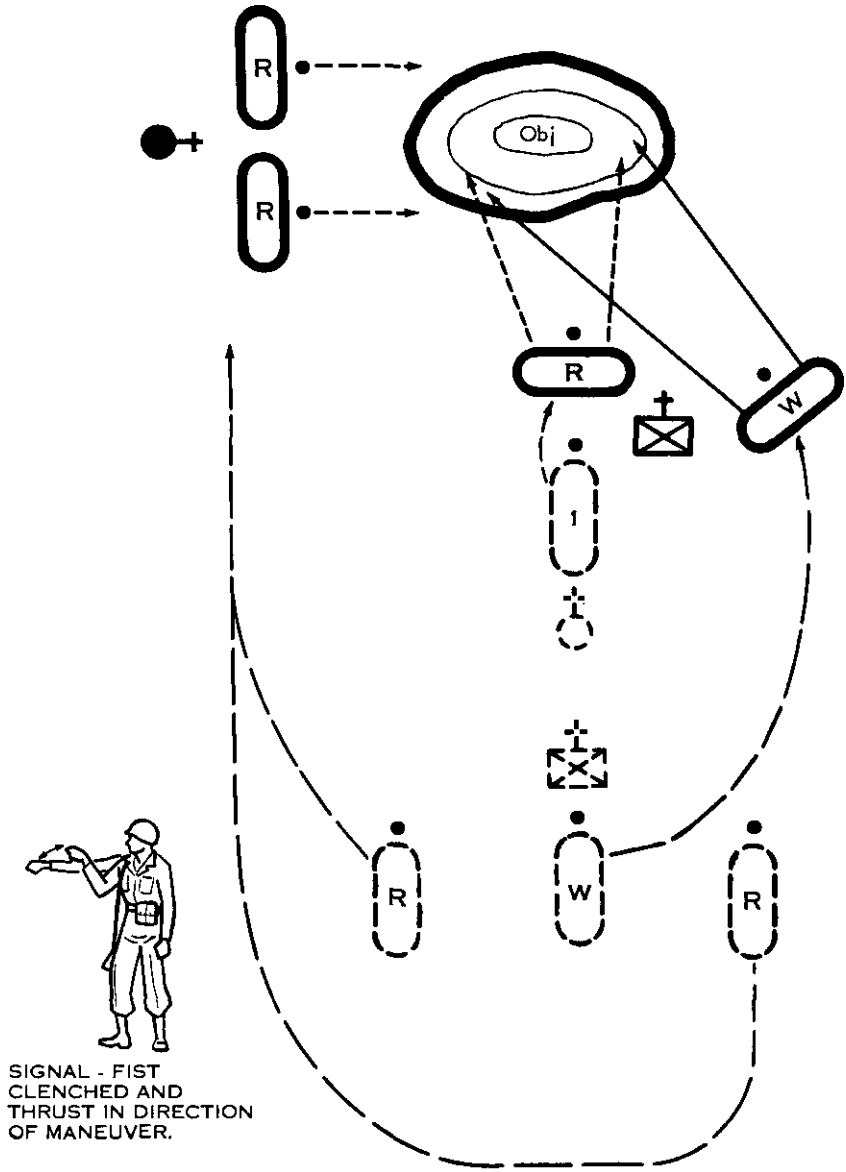


Figure 74. Maneuver left from platoon wedge.

able to take the enemy under effective fire. Here they either form an assault line under supporting fires or execute squad battle drill.

12. Weapons Squad and Attached Crew-Served Weapons

The platoon leader must issue a fragmentary order to the platoon sergeant and weapons squad leader in order to most efficiently

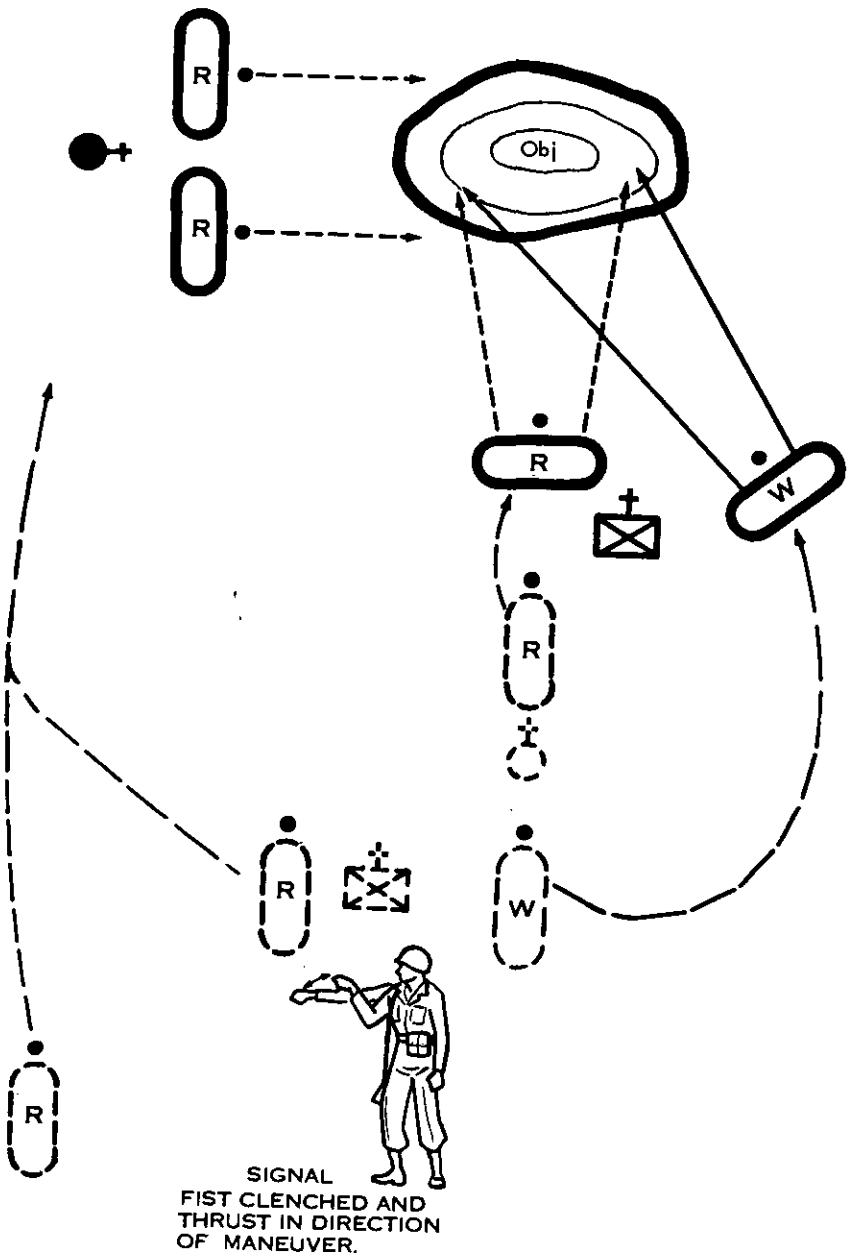


Figure 75. Maneuver left from platoon echelon.

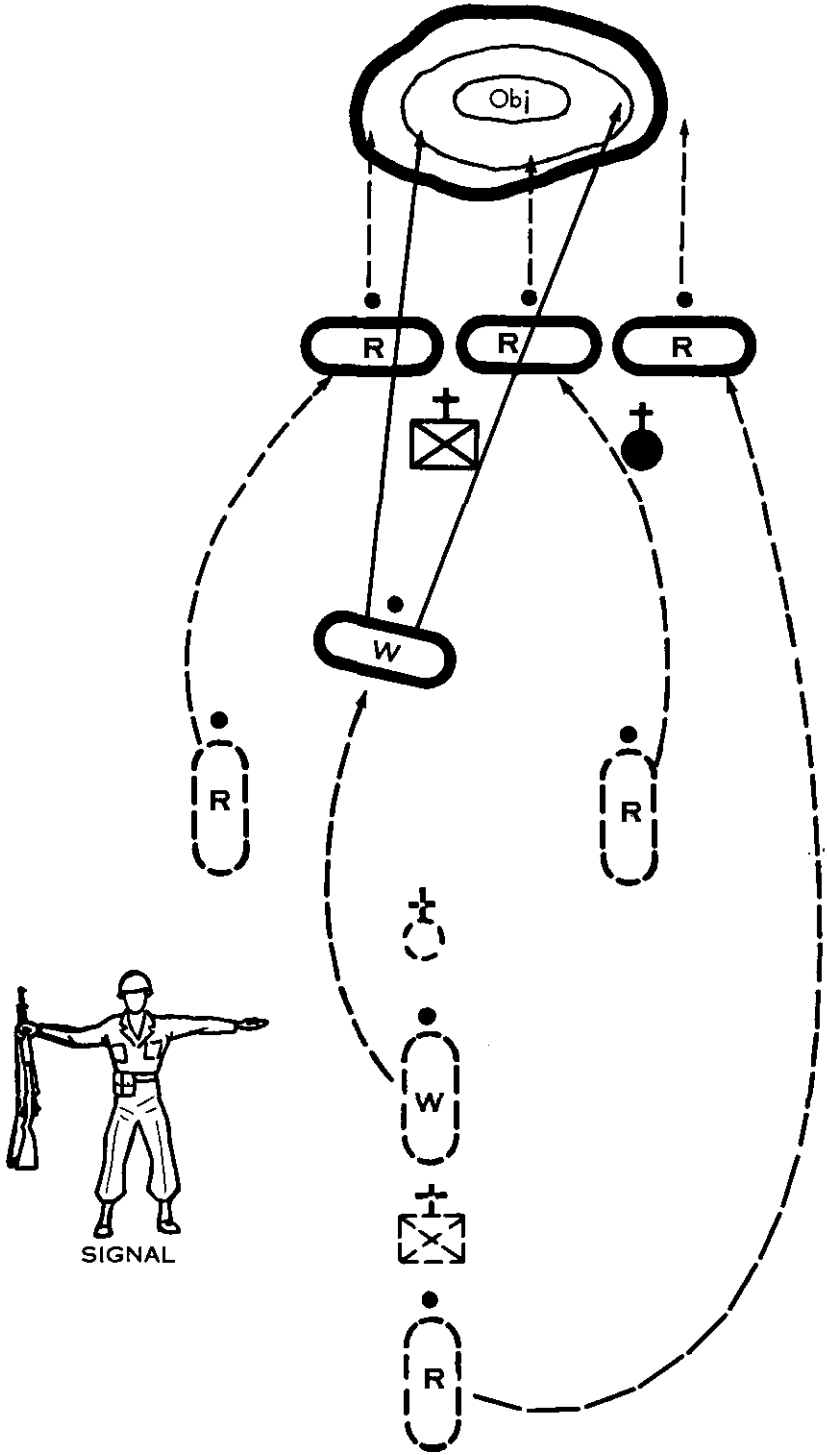


Figure 76. Maneuver front from platoon vee.

employ the organic and attached crew-served weapons. Normally, attached crew-served weapons are employed with the weapons squad. The platoon sergeant usually remains with the fire support element.

13. Battle Drill for the Mechanized Platoon

During movement tanks and artillery provide the primary firepower and protection for the APC's, with the machineguns on the APC's supplementing these fires. Leaders must be alert for quick changes of formation to counter enemy action or to properly use the terrain.

a. The platoon leader controls his platoon while mounted by the use of radio, flag signals, and arm-and-hand signals. The platoon must be immediately responsive to the platoon leaders orders in changing mounted formations to adapt to existing circumstances. When the platoon leader gives the command to adopt a certain formation, his APC is the base vehicle in all cases and the remainder of the APC's will base their positions on that of the base vehicle. See appendix II for mounted platoon formations and changes.

b. When dismounted action is required the platoon leader uses radio, flag signals, or arm-and-hand signals to cause the platoon to dismount and assume the required formation. The platoon sergeant normally controls the movement and actions of the APC's when the platoon has dismounted. This is done by issuing instructions to the drivers. A platoon SOP should be established as to the actions taken by the driver when the platoon dismounts. One driver should be designated to be in command in the absence of leaders.

c. Mounting and dismounting from the APC's is SOP within the platoon and is a part of battle drill. Normally, a squad is mounted in each APC with the platoon leader being the commander of the lead APC, and the platoon sergeant the commander of the weapons squad APC. The squad in the APC in which the platoon leader is riding is normally the base squad for the initial dismounted formation.

(1) Mounting techniques. Tactical integrity of fire teams is maintained to facilitate control upon dismounting. One fire team, or weapons team, is seated on each side of the APC. Fire team leaders sit next to the ramp. Normally the squad leader will act as vehicle commander. In cases where the platoon leader or platoon sergeant are acting as vehicle commander, the squad leader will sit next to the ramp on the left side of the APC. The

squad leader gives the command to mount the APC. The fire team leaders lead their fire teams to the ramp of the APC, stop and allow the fire team members to load; the fire team leader then seats himself next to the ramp and reports to the squad leader that his fire team is loaded. The squad leader may either precede the squad into the APC or mount from the front if he is vehicle commander. If the squad leader is not the vehicle commander, he mounts last and seats himself next to the ramp on the left side, reporting to the vehicle commander that the squad is loaded. The vehicle commander looks around the APC to insure that all men are clear of the ramp and commands RAISE RAMP to the driver.

(2) Dismounting techniques. The rapid dismounting and deployment of the squad and the immediate establishment of control by the squad leader are essential. Dismounting is often accomplished under fire with only the driver and vehicle commander being able to see the terrain and enemy. Consequently, the vehicle commander must orient the individuals in the APC prior to dismounting. When the APC halts, the vehicle commander orients the squad in this manner.

ALERT ----------"PREPARE TO DISMOUNT"
DIRECTION ----------"ACTION FRONT"
ENEMY ----------"ENEMY INFANTRY"
FORMATION ----------"SQUAD LINE"
FRIENDLY TROOPS -----"TANKS AND INFANTRY BOTH FLANKS"
EXECUTION ----------"DISMOUNT"

(*a*) Upon receiving the command DISMOUNT, the driver lowers the ramp and the fire team leaders immediately lead their fire teams out of the carrier and assume the desired formation. The vehicle commander may either come out through the rear of the APC or dismount through the top. In either case he joins his unit to assume control.

(*b*) Normally the APC is oriented in the direction of the expected action to facilitate dismounting.

(*c*) Figures 77 and 78 depict typical squad actions in dismounting. The squad should be drilled in the dismounting technique for all directions and formations.

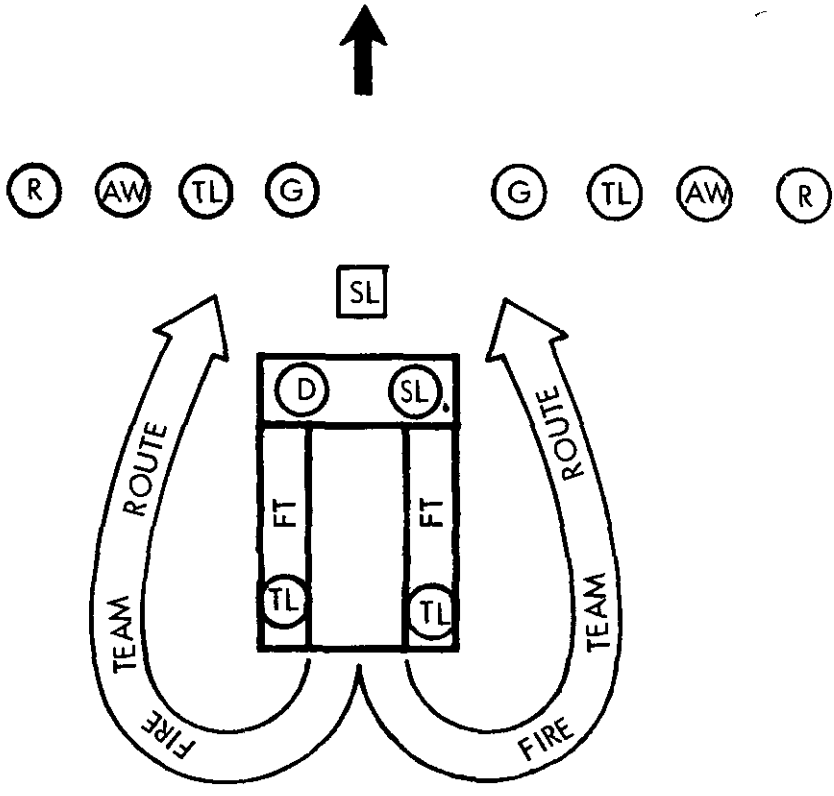


Figure 77. Dismounting into line formation.

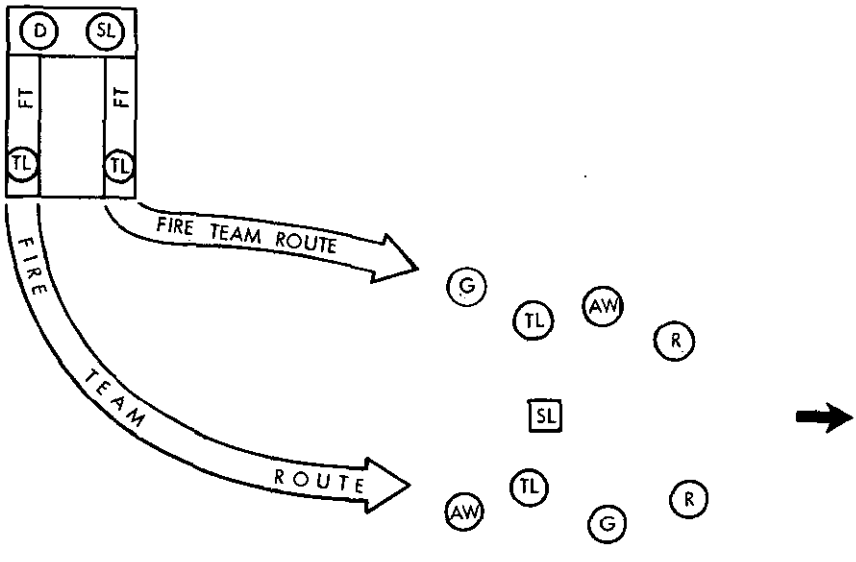


Figure 78. Dismounting into squad column, fire teams abreast.

INDEX

	Paragraphs	Page
Advance party:		
Conduct	181	216
Mechanized	185	218
Air:		
Assembly and reorganization	165	205
Emergency conditions	163	204
Airborne:		
Airmobile operation	149	196
Raids	81	104
Antiguerrilla operations	86	109
Armored personnel carriers (APC's):		
Consolidation	54	61
Control	50	56
If not available	65	82
In defense	124	172
Protection	app. III, 13	264
Rejoining	63	76
River crossings	79	103
Assault:		
Against enemy defense	35	39
Airborne/airmobile plan	157	198
Airmobile operation	170	207
Conduct	63	76
Attack:		
By infiltration	85	108
Conduct	28, 33, 48, 54, 73, 166	23, 33, 53, 61, 93, 205
Fortified area	74	94
From march column	187	219
"Hammer and Anvil"	87	110
Line of departure (LD)	29	24
Night	55	64
Phases I, II, and III	67	83
Preparation	47, 53, 72	53, 59, 92
Tanks	58	65
Tanks and mechanized infantry	60	70
Barrages:		
Definition	96	123
Widths	96	123
Battle drill:		
From squad formation	app. III, 9	255
General	app. III, 1	250
Built-up area:		
Attack	67	83

	Paragraphs	Page
Casualties:		
In nuclear attack	14	14
Chemical and biological warfare	16	16
City fighting:		
Building entry	69	86
Control measures	68	86
Combat formation:		
General	app. II, 1	225
Combat outpost line (COP):		
Defense	115	154
Occupation	114	153
Organization	112	151
Withdrawal	113	153
Communications:		
Explanation	19	18
Means	40	45
Retrograde	130	176
Company:		
Rear area	107	146
Support 81-mm mortars	22	19
Conduct:		
Advance party	181	216
Consolidation:		
Plan	37	43
Control measures:		
Tactical	40	45
COPL:		
Defense	116	154
Counterattack:		
Execution	107	124
Crew-served weapons:		
Attached	app. III, 12	261
CP-OP:		
General	106	145
Daylight withdrawal:		
Retrograde operations	147	195
Techniques	138	183
Defense:		
Against tanks	122	169
Antitank	96	123
Conduct	104, 110	142, 149
COPL	115	154
Echelons	95	122
Forward rifle platoon	97	126
Fundamentals	96	123
Mechanized rifle platoon	125	175
Night	105	144
Perimeter	118	157
Platoon mission	94	121
Preparation	103	142
Reverse slope	117	155
Rifle squad	101	136
Riverline	119	159

	Paragraphs	Page
Defense—Continued		
Roadblock	120	162
Weapons squad	102	140
Delaying action:		
Conduct	144	192
Retrograde operation	129	175
Delaying actions:		
General	142	188
Detachments:		
Left in contact	136	181
Division:		
Support	24	21
Echelon:		
Airborne/airmobile operation	151	197
Formation	app. II, 9	238
Of defense	95	122
Encirclement:		
Guerilla force	87	110
Enemy aircraft:		
Action against	17	17
Enemy information:		
Reporting	18	17
Equipment:		
Preparation for aerial delivery	162	206
Final coordination line	29	24
Fire and movement:		
Explanation	28	23
Fires:		
Element	app. III, 3	251
Planning	98	128
Platoon plan	96	123
Raid support plan	81	104
Small arms	96	123
Supporting	44	51
Tank support	61	75
Teams abreast	app. II, 6	227
Teams in column	app. III, 7	255
Flank guard:		
Mechanized	186	219
Mission	182	217
Foot marches:		
Tactical	179	213
Forces:		
On COPL	111	149
Formations:		
Battle drill	app. III, 9	255
Changes	app. II, 10	238
Company	41	49
Dismount platoon with tanks	app. II, 16	243
Echelon	app. II, 9	238
Line	app. II, 9	238
Modified squad column	app. II, 15	241

	Paragraphs	Page
Formations—Continued		
Mounted	app. II, 11	238
Platoon	41	50
Squad	41	50
Vee	app. II, 9	238
Wedge	app. II, 9	238
With tanks	app. II, 14	241
Forward edge of battle area (FEBA):		
Coordination	114	153
Definition	97	126
"Hammer and anvil":		
Attack	83	106
Howitzer:		
105-mm and 155-mm	96	123
Illumination:		
Artificial	43	51
Incendiaries:		
Use	67	83
Infiltration:		
Planning	84	106
Initial objective:		
Seizure	170	207
Infrared filters:		
Use	146	193
Intelligence:		
Airborne/airmobile operations	155	198
General	18	17
Introduction:		
Purpose and scope	1	3
Joint airborne:		
Operations	150	196
Jumpmaster:		
Inspection	162	202
Responsibilities	163	204
Key terrain:		
Defense	96	123
Leaders:		
Positions	41	49
Leadership:		
Principles	8	6
Left or right:		
Maneuver	app. III, 10	255
Line:		
Final coordination (FCL)	29, 34	24, 35
Formation	app. II, 9	238
Of departure	29, 33	24, 33
Phase	29, 40	24, 45
Link-up:		
Airborne/airmobile	157	198

	Paragraphs	Page
Machineguns:		
In built-up area	70	89
Position	30	26
Maneuvering element:		
Tasks 1, 2, 3	76	97
March column:		
Attack from	187	219
Marshalling:		
Airborne/airmobile	160, 168	201, 206
Mechanized:		
Movements	185	218
Platoon actions	62	76
Platoon positions	127	173
Rifle platoon in defense	123	172
Missions:		
Flank guard company	182	217
Rear guard company	183	217
Reserve platoon	107	146
Mopping up:		
Need	73	93
Mortars:		
81-mm and 4.2-inch	70	89
Movement:		
Night	178	213
The point	180	215
Night attack:		
Defense	105	144
Reserve platoon	91	119
Tanks and mechanized infantry	66	83
Night withdrawal:		
Conduct	137	182
Retrograde operations	145	193
Nuclear weapons:		
Characteristics	14	14
Objective:		
Consolidation and reorganization	64	81
Offensive:		
Action against guerrillas	87	110
Operations:		
Airmobile	159	201
Antiguerrilla	86	109
Guerrilla offensive	87	110
Joint airborne	159	201
Orders	11	12
River crossing	77	100
Organic and supporting weapons:		
Employment	70	89
Patrols:		
Antiguerrilla operations	88	118
Security	42	50
Perimeter defense:		
Platoon position	118	157

	Paragraphs	Page
Personnel:		
Duties	6	5
Plan:		
Air movement	159	201
Consolidation	37	43
Fire support	31	26
Marshalling	161	201
Platoon:		
Antitank	23	20
Battle drill	app. III, 10	255
Conduct of attack	76	97
Control	51	57
Defense	52, 71, 93, 100	59, 90, 121, 134
Echelon	app. II, 16	243
Formations, dismounted	app. II, 8	232
Heavy mortar	23	20
Mechanized, in attack	49	56
Night attack	39	44
On combat outpost line	111	149
Plan of attack	31, 46	26, 52
Reorganization	38	44
Retrograde operations	145	193
Rifle	27	22
Points:		
Release	40	45
Psychological aspects:		
Nuclear warfare	14	14
Raid:		
Conduct	82	105
Execution	81	104
Rallying points:		
Assignment	142	188
Rear guard company:		
Mission	183	217
Reconnaissance:		
Detailed ground	174	210
Relief in place:		
Definition	121	165
Reserve:		
Forward rifle company in defense	106	145
Mission	107	146
Planning	108	148
Rifle platoon	89	118
Retrograde:		
Mechanized platoon	145	193
Operations	129	175
Reverse slope:		
Defense	117	155
Rifle platoon:		
As reserve	89	118
Capabilities	3	4
Characteristics	4	4

	Paragraphs	Page
Rifle platoon—Continued		
Conditions of warfare	12	13
Tactical movements	176	212
Riflemen:		
Firing positions	101	136
River crossing:		
Conduct	79	103
Hasty and deliberate	77	100
Riverline:		
Defense	119	159
Roadblock:		
Defense	120	162
Reduction	189	221
Security:		
Against guerrilla operations	86	109
Missions	177	213
Platoon leader plans	99	128
Small arms:		
Fire	96	123
Small unit leader:		
Estimate of situation	10	9
Maintenance	20	19
Squad:		
Actions, mechanized leaders	62	76
AT	70	89
Battle drill	app. III, 6	255
City fighting techniques	69	86
Column	app. II, 6	227
Control	app. III, 5	252
Employment	98	128
File	app. II, 5	227
Fire teams abreast	app. II, 6	227
Formations	app. II, 4	226
Leader	6, 32	5, 32
Line	app. II, 7	232
Orientation	app. III, 13	264
Rifle	27, 101	22, 136
Weapons	27	22
Tactical:		
Ground plan	157	198
Movements	176	212
Tank-hunter:		
Teams	122	169
Tanks:		
AND mechanized infantry	59	67
Attack with	56	64
Defense against	122	169
Formations	app. II, 14, 17	241, 244
Infantry riding	65	82
Night attack	66	83
Support by fire	61	75
Support with infantry	57	65
Wedge formation	app. II, 16	243

	Paragraphs	Page
Troop:		
Disposition	119	159
Leading procedures	9	7
Troops and vehicles on airfields:		
Conduct	162	202
Vee:		
Formation	app. II, 9	238
Warfare:		
Chemical and biological	16	16
Nuclear	1	3
Nuclear tactical operations	15	15
Weapons:		
For attacking platoon	35	39
Organic and attached	45	52
Squad in defense	102	140
Wedge:		
Formation	app. II, 9	238
Withdrawal from action:		
Retrograde operation	129	175
Withdrawals:		
By air	172	210
By fire team maneuver	141	186
By squad maneuver	141	186
Daylight techniques	133	177
From action	133	177
Methods	141	192
Night techniques	133	177
Through friendly units	131	176

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For explanation of abbreviations used, see AR 320–50.

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